NBC NIGHTLY NEWS - ELECTION 2000 REPORTS DECEMBER 2000

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From December 2000 NBC Nightly News reports on Election 2000

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good evening it was a day unlike any other in the history of the United States Supreme Court and in the long tortured path of this presidential election tonight the nine justices of the US Supreme Court are deciding what to do about the state of the disputed votes in Florida and their decision could accelerate the process but it might also slow it down at the same time in Florida the state Supreme Court rejected an appeal from Vice President Gore to immediately start counting disputed ballots in his formal contesting of the election at the end of the day Vice President Gore has fewer options but the big question mark remains the US Supreme Court NBC's Pete Williams was inside for the arguments today he joins us tonight Pete Tom good evening tonight the justices faced a decision unprecedented in American history exactly how to intervene in the middle of a presidential election dispute and after a morning of intense oral argument the Florida Supreme Court decision they're reviewing seems to be in trouble this Court has seen dramatic legal showdowns before but nothing quite like this Bush should you have protestors dueling outside beginning at daybreak hundreds of people camping out on the sidewalk all night including high-priced Washington lawyers eager to grab one of the scarce seats inside the courtroom jammed former Justice Byron white members of Congress children of Vice President Gore and candidate Cheney top gore advisers in from the Florida battlefield and for the first time ever an audiotape immediately released of the entire proceeding god save the United States and this honorable Court the court seems eager to entering slightly before the 10:00 a.m. start time beginning 90 minutes of intense questioning the key issue did Florida Supreme Court go too far when it extended the time for manual recounts beyond the deadline set in state law article 2 of the US Constitution says states choose their presidential electors as the state legislature shall direct by passing laws but today several

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direct by passing laws but today several justices seem concerned that the Florida Supreme Court instead based its ruling not on the Legislature's law but the state's Constitution court's opinion as quite clearly saying having determined what the legislative intent was we find that our state constitution Trump's that legislative intent I don't think there's any other way to read it and that is that is a real problem it seems to me under Article two and nearly as many on the courts say they think the extended deadline violates a separate federal law that says election rules must be in place before voting day it had to register somehow with the Florida courts that that statute was there and that it might be in the state's best interest not to go around changing the law after the election even so the Florida Court has its defenders today some justices say a state court should have the final word on what state laws mean telling that to the bush campaigns lawyer Theodore Olson in case after case we have said we owe the highest respect to what the state says state Supreme Court says is this it states not this is a very unusual situation Justice Ginsburg because it is in the context of a presidential election and it is in the context of federal rights and a very practical question today for the Florida Secretary of State's lawyer what difference will a Supreme Court ruling make to Gore's lawsuit contesting the election is there any respect in which this really makes a difference what's the consequence of

our going one way or the other now in this case it will make a difference to the outcome of the election because there's an ongoing contest which is interrelated and is involved in Supreme Court's opinion based solely on today's questions many legal scholars now believe there's a five-to-four majority of the justices who believe the Florida Court went too far if that turns out to be the decision here the Supreme Court could send the case back to Florida with instructions to try again and base it this time only

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to try again and base it this time only on state law Tom thanks very much NBC's Pete Williams tonight obviously a great deal is known about these justices and how they have voted in the past and that does provide some clues as to the likely path that they'll take this time so we've asked our chief legal affairs correspondent Dan Abrams tonight to take us through the core and well Tom even in the past 20 years the court has gone through a major transformation once considered activist and liberal now far more conservative in a legal sense meaning more reluctant to try and figure out what a statute means more likely to accept just the words of the law rather than deciphering its intent seven of the nine justices appointed by Republicans Chief Justice Rehnquist the veteran appointed in 1972 by President Nixon Ford appointed one Reagan three Bush two and Clinton two as of late many decisions divided 5-4 Rehnquist Scalia and Thomas considered more conservative Stevens Ginsburg Breyer and Souter more liberal with O'Connor and Kennedy those crucial swing votes and many think they could be the key here as well Tom then which of the candidates take from all of us today well there's a little something for everyone for the gore team the four more liberal members seem protective of the Florida Supreme Court's ruling and while only Stevens seemed to actually defend the court's ruling itself the other three seemed to give deference to the Florida Supreme Court but the bush team can be encouraged by the type of questions asked by Scalia and Rehnquist delving into the particular zuv why the Florida Supreme Court did what it did seemingly concerned about a possible constitutional violation Thomas didn't ask any questions so what about those crucial swing votes Kennedy and O'Connor well they seem to agree with the bush team that the Florida Supreme Court may have changed the rules by imposing that deadline of November to 26 but they also seemed uncertain about whether this is a federal issue and remember if this isn't

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federal issue and remember if this isn't a federal issue the court may decide not to decide Tom thanks very much NBC's Dan Abrams night at the same time there was considerable and significant legal action on several fronts in the state of Florida and not much encouraging news for Vice President Al Gore there either NBC's Kelly O'Donnell is in Florida tonight Kelley Tom a series of late rulings all spelled big disappointment for Al Gore tonight first the Florida Supreme Court says to an immediate hand recounting of votes costing him precious time next the High Court refuses to order a revote in Palm Beach County where that controversial butterfly ballot may have confused some voters and tonight the federal appeals court in Atlanta agrees to hear arguments from the bush side that claim a manual recount already done in Palm Beach was unconstitutional all this with ballots here and ready for counting the final installment of that million ballot convoy delivered from Miami today 82 boxes packed with punch cards now under lock and key in Tallahassee and in the Leon County Courthouse today three cases three courtrooms hearing motions almost simultaneously judge and Sanders Saul's delaying yet again a decision under course request to start hand counting right away today the judge set ground rules predicting tomorrow's trials contest in the election out there did you freeze right in 12 hours which lawyers to pare down their cases absolutely let's get all the fluff off and proceed in that fashion also today another lawsuit accusing Republicans of illegally altering absentee ballot applications this time in Martin County the first case involving Seminole County still sorting out motions before trial next Wednesday the bush team not in any hurry GOP lawyers in the contest case submitted a witness list with 90 names

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submitted a witness list with 90 names the Democrats had just two all this to be sorted out tomorrow in a marathon court a Tom NBC's Kelly O'Donnell in Florida tonight what about the fate of the men the faith that was being discussed what what was their reaction to this day NBC's Claire Shipman is with the gore campaign tonight in Washington NBC's David Gregory is still with Governor Bush down in Texas so let's begin with you tonight well Tom the gore campaign today decided not to try to compete with the drama of the US Supreme Court hearing so no public comments from Al Gore today some of the court Watchers on his team are betting this will be a split decision favoring Bush but they really don't know what they do see it though is if Bush wins at the Supreme Court that will not end his legal challenges in Florida at least according to former Secretary of State Warren Christopher today we still have the right to contest and those contests are could go forward so I think the effect of what the court does will be psychologically very important if they bless what the Florida Supreme Court did that a big that's a big boost that it does not end a vice-president doors of contest now one thing Gore's legal team is not happy about the decision by the Florida Supreme Court not to get involved immediately in that ballot issue but they spent some time trying to explain why that may not be as bad as it seems first they say because the case was not rejected on the merits the justices made it plain they'll be happy to hear it again when it comes back up on appeal and also they say that judge in Leon County has actually set a date a timetable for a speedier trial than they ever expected they think it could be over in a matter of days and of course time is everything for the gore campaign Tom NBC's Claire Shipman tonight thanks very much down in Austin Texas NBC's David Gregory now what about Texas Governor George W Bush still at the ranch still at the ranch actually he's back here tonight Tom but he spent all day at the ranch and aides insisted that in fact he was not glued to the television set once those audio recordings were made public and they were on television but he certainly monitored all this with interest

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monitored all this with interest campaign sources saying that he called his lead lawyer Ted Olson this afternoon to get his read on how he thinks that thing's wet he went he was told they went well that Olson felt he articulated his positions successfully but it wasn't about to start making any predictions as I mentioned governor Bush is back in Austin tonight he's got a Christmas party to go to at the mansion he again spent the day meeting with top aides to discuss transition plans and eager to perpetuate the notion that his complete victory is just a matter of time now tomorrow governor Bush will meet with Republican leaders House Speaker Dennis Hastert and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott to discuss his legislative agenda both legally and politically governor Bush has said he thinks the Supreme Court's intervention in this case is actually a great opportunity to get this election went over with as quickly as possible and advisers are saying look we're really in a no-lose situation because even if the court rules ganz Bush he is still the certified winner in Florida putting the onus on the vice president to overcome me to overcome that tonight even with these supreme court victories however the bush team remains cautiously optimistic nothing more one Bush source saying that the contest in Florida is still a perilous process adding quote it's a little hard to start lighting up victory cigars just yet Tom all right thanks very much NBC's David Gregory we trust you'll keep us posted when they break out the cigar reported by John Seigenthaler good evening everyone the battle for the White House took more turns today as attorneys for al gore urged a Florida judge to recount the votes leaders of the Republican controlled Florida legislature began finalizing plans for a special session next week so it can name the state's 25 representatives to the electoral college all this while both sides waited for the US Supreme Court to weigh in on the case people were working there today but we still have no word on when that decision might come we begin our coverage tonight with NBC's Kelly O'Donnell in Tallahassee where the gore team is challenging the election results in

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challenging the election results in Circuit Court good evening Kelly good evening John a trial unlike any in history the presidency at stake and the clock running the gore team put on a case of about six hours today the feel in the courtroom so much going on lawyers huddled and conferring part of the case being prepared while another part being presented it's been a day of dimples statistics and old voting machines the third

floor at the Leon County Courthouse may be Al Gore's last route to the White House box loads of documents on the legal fast track wall-to-wall lawyers at least 30 inside the courtroom 18 of them addressing judge and sander souls did we have a emotion that we need to take your part off the vice president's lawyers laying out a five-point plan the essence of their claim legal votes from three counties they say more than enough to swing the election have not been included in Florida's certified result and should be far more than number needed to place in doubt the results of this election Bush lawyers countered that not every voter picks a presidential candidate urging the judge not to examine the ballots what he is attempting to do is to begin this court down a path that inevitably leads to a destination that he must arrive at in order to win under attack from the gore side today the voter Maddox the gore team considers the 70s ballot machine and election relic created more dimpled and invented ballots not picked up in the Machine count they're expert witness points to flaws in the vote Oh Maddox design years of wear and voter confusion another claim Chad buildup Palm Beach County machines not cleaned for two years possibly clogged with Chad's making a complete punch more difficult

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making a complete punch more difficult in some cases one home beach photomatic opened before the judge another visual aid charts and a Yale statistician to show that Palm Beach punch cards record a much higher number of so-called no votes in the presidential column the gore side called only two witnesses both challenged by lawyers for Governor Bush saying both fell short on science the bush team called a Democrat as its first witness the Palm Beach County canvassing board chairman to try to show that they had felt there followed a fair standard the last witness of the day believe it or not a plastics and rubber expert called by the bush team to knock down claims that rubber inside the voting machine aged and hardened over the years contributing to more dimpled ballots though cases over for the evening we're back here for more of the trial tomorrow John NBC's Kelly O'Donnell thank you this isn't the only Florida Court considering some facet of the post-election dispute the state Supreme Court and other lower courts are part of the picture as well NBC's chief law correspondent Dan Abrams has been tracking them all from Tallahassee good evening Dan well good evening John almost 40 cases have emerged from the ashes of this election but no question the big one in judge Saul's courtroom now the only effort by the gore team to overturn the certified election results but there are others out there that could have the same effect in Seminole and Martin counties private citizens suing to have over 20,000 absentee votes thrown out based on irregularities with the Republican ballot applications both cases to be heard Wednesday by different judges with Bush's certified victory margin at only 537 votes either case could affect the outcome of the election

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could affect the outcome of the election so while their goal is the same the private citizens are trying to do it by excluding votes the gore team trying to do it by including more votes the key similarity no matter who wins in all likelihood all these cases will end up back in the Florida Supreme Court John and Dan what about the US Supreme Court how could its decision affect these cases when all likelihood it wouldn't affect the citizens lawsuits even if the US Supreme Court says that deadline set by the Florida Supreme Court violated some sort of federal law doesn't change anything for those citizens lawsuits but the court could deliver a legal setback to the Gores legal effort what's the difference well the gore team gained almost 400 votes between November 14th which is the Republicans supported statutory deadline and November 26th when the Florida Supreme Court set that new deadline the Supreme Court could in effect turn back the clock to the 14th when Gore when Bush was up by 930 votes John NBC's Dan Abrams in Tallahassee dan thank you while neither is President Elect both gore and bush were acting presidential today NBC's Campbell Brown is covering the Texas governor who had some important visitors today good evening camp good evening John well today governor Bush sat down with Republican congressional leaders Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert the focus Bush's legislative agenda and together a bush administration to this transition process fireside at his Texas ranch Bush and his running mate Dick Cheney welcoming men the governor tried to distance himself from during the campaign after months of criticizing Congress for partisan bickering Bush today described himself as an insider who would work with both Republicans and

Democrats this election and the fact that it is as close as has been and has drawn out as it is requires a group of citizens that rise above partisanship to do what's right for the country more so than ever in recent modern history and I

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in recent modern history and I understand that and I look forward to the challenge I really do Bush described the meeting it's the first of many focusing on his tax cut proposal education Social Security and Medicare reform Bush also said he was reaching out to some Democrats calling Louisiana Senator John Breaux a moderate who bush often praised on the campaign trail though Bush declined to say if they discussed a possible cabinet appointment and despite the pending court action in Florida Bush says he'll keep moving forward with transition plans we're confident that when it's all said and done that Andy and I will be honored to be the president and the vice president's where we're having these meetings today's meeting was part of the bush team strategy to show a contrast between these two candidates gore still fighting for Florida Bush so confident he's won he's already focusing on what he wants to accomplish in Washington John NBC's Campbell Brown covering governor Bush in Texas thank you NBC's chip Reid is outside the vice president's residence good evening chip is mr. gore making any transition moves absolutely John he is doing probably as much work as George Bush is doing it but they say he's doing it in a more discreet fashion he's not being showy they say that every day he spends a good portion of his time on it on the phone emails he's got big fat briefing books full of resumes that he's going through he has some meetings from time to time they say that he is looking at particular people for particular positions but they do not have any final decisions or announcements in the plans any time soon as for the vice president they say that he was not doing much work of any kind transition or otherwise he and Kristen his daughter and tipper his wife took a hike about two miles up the road here to a local coffee establishment but as hard as reporters tried they could not get any kind of response from him on the situation in Florida John a chip the Vice President had to court losses yesterday and the clock is ticking is there any sign that he's considering a concession speech well some people may find it surprising

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well some people may find it surprising but absolutely not they say it's partly a matter of his personality that he's such a fighter and he really believes that he won down there in Florida and he believes that ultimately the Florida courts are going to determine that they believe that even if Sanders saws the judge currently hearing the case rules against him that the Florida Supreme Court will rule with him and we know the Florida Supreme Court has ruled in his favor before also they say that even if the US Supreme Court rules against them they think it will be a narrow ruling and will not affect the contest action down there they also say that Democratic leaders across the country and especially on Capitol Hill are willing to stand behind him as long as this thing is in the courts and perhaps most important they say the polls show that the American people are at least the people who voted for Al Gore the people who are his supporters and the people they really care about say fight on and that's what they plan to do for probably another week to ten days John NBC's chip Reid in Washington chip thank you now to complaints from some gore supporters in Florida who tried to vote but couldn't their protests could produce still more court action here's NBC's Kerry Sanders Denis D'Souza is a lawyer accustomed to complicated legal nuances by any comparison voting a simple process for her but when she went to vote three weeks ago even with a voters registration card in her hand she says she was told she was not registered and could not vote I was very upset I was disappointed I felt like I had been deprived of a very important right protesters say the same thing happened all across Florida on Election Day hundreds of disenfranchised voters who might have altered the outcome in Florida problem areas around big cities Tallahassee Jacksonville Tampa Orlando Daytona Beach and Miami the n-double-a-cp says its analyzed the problem and found a disturbing trend all of them have this one thing in common mostly black precincts

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mostly black precincts accident I don't think so why were voters turned away mostly state officials say because names were missing from precinct voter lists those are normal problems that are encountered by voters on Election Day especially in a presidential election when some people only will go to vote on presidential elections elections officials say those clerical errors resulted from the huge number of new voters add in the past two years more than a half million statewide the problem on election day not unique to minorities in the Orlando area election officials admit untold numbers of new voters were left off the voting rolls why those voters had relied on the driver's license bureaus to sign them up and that system did not work I just want it for Denise D'Souza who took her five-year-old son Devin to the polls last month a different lesson than the one she intended Kerry Sanders NBC News Miami room as lawyers for George W Bush and Al Gore continued their battle over a recount of disputed votes inside the courtroom unexpected testimony from a bush witness on hand recounts while on national television Republican running mate Dick Cheney said Al Gore should concede NBC's Kelly O'Donnell is at the courthouse in Tallahassee good evening Kelly good evening John thirteen witnesses well over 100 exhibits in about 18 hours this weekend still not fast enough for Al Gore his lawyers pleading with a judge again today to immediately start a hand recount again today the judge said no putting off a decision today the rushed pace of this case made for some surprises day two the bush defense an attack on the Democrats evidence an accusation that Al Gore has personally spread misinformation yes the vice president was strong about that wrong he says that the punch card voting devices under attack in this election

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devices under attack in this election contest are more often used in less affluent for democratic communities when former bush team also charging fuzzy mass and it makes for an and inaccurate projection because it is based on a false premise the Stanford educated statistician hammered the methods and conclusions of the core legal teams expert disputing the idea that the high number of no votes in the contested counties means a problem with the voting machines not the voters Bush lawyers say there's no proof is there any valid basis that people were trying to vote for Al Gore but they simply weren't able to push the silence through the chair absolutely none from math class to shop as Bush called one of the patent holding engineers who helped design the photomatic back in the 60s several thousand of them were sold to miami-dade and Palm Beach counties witness John almond shut down Gore claims that old worn and dirty equipment caused voting errors I seriously doubt that the voter would be unable to push the Chad through on a normal boating device what appeared to be a rough morning for Al Gore turned on a Perry Mason moment during the testimony a Gore aide not seen on camera delivered evidence one copy I'm using I got it five minutes ago all right somebody gave it to me and that's how things are going the document the witnesses 1981 patent application for a new and improved model voting device in it this Bush witness revealed a series of flaws in the vote o matic the kind used in this election supporting several of Gore's arguments therefore the material typically used for punch boards and punch and card voting can and does contribute to potentially unreadable votes more than identifying the problem the witness even provided a solution the same one Gore is

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provided a solution the same one Gore is seeking you need either re-inspection or manual recount the burden of proof here is on Al Gore to convince judge and sander souls that a hand count is warranted and could change the election outcome so far while Republicans are on the offensive in the court of public opinion Bush running mate Dick Cheney urge the vice president see history would regard him in a better light if he were to bring this for the close in the very near future back in Tallahassee the judge working overtime tonight the gore team putting on a rebuttal case and final argument still to come John NBC's Kelly O'Donnell Kelly thanks now to NBC's chief law correspondent Dan Abrams who is also in Tallahassee and Dan how important is all this detailed testimony we heard today about the voting machines and the analysis of voting patterns well and John don't forget about the Chad build-up testimony as well look these witnesses may not make the difference it really may hinge on it sort of technical legal question and that is how much can the judge look at the evidence how does he look at the evidence Kenny simply decide that there are legal uncounted votes out there as the gore team claims or is the bush team argues does he only look to whether

there was a mistake made by the county canvassing boards in Miami for not hand recounting the votes and in Palm Beach based on how they did it John where are these differing standards coming from well look the gore team is focusing more in the words of the statute the bush team relying more on case law the relevant Florida provision says that you can contest election election on the following grounds quote rejection of a number of legal votes sufficient to change or place in doubt the result of the election in essence the gore team saying look if there are enough uncounted legal votes out there this judge must order a recount the bush team saying it is not that simple and they actually quote from the Florida Court of Appeals decision which says that the Florida statute quote clearly leaves the decision whether or not to hold a manual recount within the discretion of the canvassing board now

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discretion of the canvassing board now which standard the judge adopts could determine the outcome of this case John NBC's Dan Abrams in Tallahassee dan thank you now action is expected this week in at least four other courts including the US Supreme Court which could issue its ruling as early as tomorrow NBC's John Palmer is at the court tonight good evening John good evening John at least one of the justices was seen here at the court today and all the clerk's were here working very busily on a case that could have a major impact on the outcome of the election a handful of demonstrators and a few curious tourists were the only indications that much of the nation's attention will be focused here this week the key issue before the High Court did the Florida Supreme Court go too far when it extended the time for the hand counting of ballots beyond the deadline set by the Secretary of State the case is submitted Chief Justice Rehnquist at the close of arguments on Friday officially taking the case and signaling the beginning of deliberations the court has several options it could rule that the Florida Supreme Court acted improperly when it extended the time for certifying the vote total that would favor Gore rule that by extending the certification deadline the court overstepped its authority that would favor Bush another option refused to make any ruling on this case at this time the attorneys for gore and Bush you argue the case before the Supreme Court disagreed today on whether the justices might go for the third option and refused to decide I suspect there's a good chance that they will say you know we didn't really need to take this case there's no real federal urgency done rather encouraged that the gore people would like the court not to decide the case that gives me some comfort and encouragement I think that they will decide the case a constitutional lawyer not affiliated with either candidate said a decision to overturn the Florida Supreme Court would

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overturn the Florida Supreme Court would put Gore in an awkward position if it decides for governor Bush well then I think that Al Gore is going to be put under tremendous pressure to concede well because of the importance of this case most court watchers expect the justices to strive for is unanimous a decision as they can get certainly anything but a five-to-four decision John NBC's John Palmer at the Supreme Court John thanks much almost four weeks after election day and still no president-elect Governor Bush's official lead in Florida is 537 votes out of nearly six million cast a margin of point zero zero nine percent so smaller more that Vice President Gore feels duty-bound to keep fighting but how long will his fellow Democrats backed that play NBC's Joe Johns reports Vice President Gore his wife and a daughter attended church in Washington today so far congressional Democrats are supporting his fight though one top senator embraced a cutoff date for the election controversy the burden falls on George W Bush and Al Gore equally and the burden to concede the election for the national interest comes as early as a definitive court decision or as late as December 12 by December 12th each state must settle disputes over its slate of delegates to the Electoral College just six days later the electors actually cast their votes but the idea of setting a deadline to resolve the controversy in Florida is still being resisted by most Democratic congressional leaders I'm not going to suggest that there's a proper time for either bush or Gore to get out of the race I think we need to let the process work its will Republicans continue to hope moderate and conservative Democrats will help pressure Gore out of the race Louisiana Senator John burrows name has even been floated as a bush cabinet member he has spoken with both candidates but still might stay where he is I think being in the Senate with a

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is I think being in the Senate with a 50-50 tie vote is a unique opportunity and offers some great challenges that 50/50 split can only happen if Gore is defeated sending Democratic vice-presidential nominee Joe Lieberman back to the Senate in effect their party gains on Capitol Hill by losing the White House and one congressional Democrat has said publicly that Gore should throw in the towel I think we ought to go ahead and Bennett let it happen and that Al Gore come back you have a take walk in four years he'll win the presidency hands down the watch for defecting Democrats will continue as Congress resumes work this week Joe John's NBC News the Capitol this is NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw good evening a Florida State charged little-known outside his courtroom until last week may have finally settled the presidential election almost one month after voters went to the polls judge Sanders Saul's turned back every argument made by Vice President Al Gore's legal team in its contesting of the election this on a day when the US Supreme Court sent back to the Florida State Supreme Court its earlier ruling extending the deadline for accepting disputed ballots and the gore team now hopes to take Judge Saul's decision to the Florida Supreme Court so there are legal moves that are left but this certainly appeared to be a giant step for the white house for Texas Governor George W Bush we begin tonight with NBC's David bloom who's in Florida David Tom the vice president's lawyers are already scrambling late today they filed this emergency appeal asking the Florida Supreme Court to immediately take up the case but make no mistake in the courthouse behind me late today judge Sanders Saul's issued a ruling that on each and every points goes against the vice president's the Court finds and the plaintiffs have failed to carry the requisite burden approved for Vice President Gore a sweeping defeats there

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President Gore a sweeping defeats there will be no recount of 14,000 disputed ballots to judge Sanders Saul's ruling that local election officials had done their jobs appropriately and that Gore's lawyers had never shown that even if there was a recount the election results in Florida which changed the local boards have been given broad discretion which no court may overrule perhaps under clear abuse of discretion even before Judge Saul's finished reading his ruling Gore's lawyers dashed from the courtroom filing an emergency appeal asking the Florida Supreme Court's immediately take up the case they won we lost we're appealing this is gonna be resolved by the Florida Supreme Court promptly and what I think is that that will be the end of the matter in their appeal filed late today Gore's lawyers writes time is extraordinarily short because of the schedule imposed by federal law the Florida Supreme Court must immediately and finally resolve the issues but governor Bush's lawyers argued the ruling against Gore could not have been stronger and again urged the vice president's to concede it's time for everyone to do what's in the best interest of the country I know mr. Boies said that I told all of you he had filed Appeals will deal with them accordingly but this was an awfully strong well reasoned ruling from the from the trial court judge Joe Clark represents Florida's Republican Secretary of State's who eight days ago certified the election results giving Bush a slim 537 vote with Secretary has been completely vindicated in my view at this point absolutely the judge found against them in every in particular and basically has upheld everything that the secretary did there are still two wildcards another judge in Tallahassee could still throw out thousands of absentee ballots given the election at least temporarily to Gore at that point the Florida Legislature could still step in on Governor Bush's behalf but make no

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in on Governor Bush's behalf but make no mistake the vice president's prospects of ascending to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue dimmed considerably tonight Tom thanks very much NBC's David bloom tonight earlier today the US Supreme Court issued its eagerly-awaited judgment and that one was not such an open-and-shut case NBC's Pete Williams tonight on the highest court in the land and what it asks of the Florida Supreme Court Tom barely 72 hours after hearing the case that justices announced their remarkably fast decision and bridging the apparent differences among the court apparently deep differences they resist the urge to grade the Florida Supreme Court ruling as either pass or fail and instead label it incomplete court

officials released the ruling just before noon even while the Court is hearing argument in a different case the decision comes so quickly it's apparent that justices reached agreement over the weekend unsigned opinion issued for the court as a whole and with no dissents cancels out the Florida Supreme Court ruling that extended the manual recount deadline today's action sends the case back to Florida and instructs the state Supreme Court to rewrite its decision and pay closer attention to the requirements of the US Constitution and federal law constitutional scholars say today's opinion contains such a clear roadmap for the state court to follow that the Florida justices can likely reach the same conclusion using different grounds I don't think it would be difficult for the Florida Supreme Court to clarify what it meant as an interpreter of Florida law as for the practical effect of today's ruling it temporarily takes away the legal justification for the extended recount that led to a gain of almost 400 votes for Gore but legal experts say state officials would have to recertify the vote again to actually change the total and the Florida Supreme Court is already at work to revise its ruling language in today's decision strongly suggest the US Supreme Court sees no further reason to revisit this case unless the Florida Court completely flunks the rewrite I would have loved it

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flunks the rewrite I would have loved it the US Supreme Court had set of bouquet of flowers to the Florida Supreme Court and said you're right we affirm but that was very unlikely to happen once they decided to take the case but Bush campaign lawyers tonight say they haven't given up and might ask the nine justices to take another look the fact that they gave fairly explicit instructions to the Florida Supreme Court makes it clear that they were giving them guidelines and if they didn't follow those guidelines we would have an opportunity for rehearing on that point after the Florida Supreme Court rewrites its decision it would come back here only if the Bush campaign tries again to appeal it but the justices suggest tonight this is ultimately something for Congress to resolve when it counts the electoral votes Tom thanks very much NBC's Pete Williams at the US Supreme Court tonight so for the vice president and his team of warriors to pull this out now will require the legal equivalent of a Hail Mary pass but there are some remaining options NBC chief legal correspondent Dan Abrams tonight Dan what are Gore's chances on appeal in Florida to begin with well town most people say their chances are not very good even though just two weeks ago the Supreme Court overturned a big lower court opinion what's different this time well last time the issue was just the date of certification here you're talking about literally overturning an election the theme of the courts opinion last time was also give these canvassing boards more discretion more power that's exactly what the lower court judge did here and they also may be a little gun-shy based on the US Supreme Court's ruling Tom and then what about those other cases that are still pending out there for the Al Gore team well Tom they've been over 40 lawsuits filed in this case but remember this one in judge Saul's courtroom is the only effort by the gore team to overturn the election results but there are others that could have the same effect there are two lawsuits in particular filed by Democrats private citizens in Seminole and Martin counties suing to have about 25 thousand absentee ballots thrown out based on irregularities with ballot

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based on irregularities with ballot applications both cases are going to be heard Wednesday by different judges a win for the Democrats in either case could give Gore the election and that leaves the Republicans a bit nervous neither of those cases will be affected by today's US Supreme Court decision Tom thanks very much NBC's Dan Abrams tonight now let's go to Austin Texas where there are understandably a lot of happy people tonight and NBC's David Gregory is covering the governor David well Tom tonight senior Bush advisors are actually casting the ruling by Judge Saul's is the ultimate confirmation of Bush's victory Karen Hughes his communications director saying a short time ago quote that Americans should take comfort in the fact that Judge Saul's has ruled that no amount of recounting would change the outcome of the election and that to her and the entire Bush team is the key point a top ally of Bush on Capitol Hill saying tonight that in fact there's a lot more relief than jubilation within the bush camp why because they never expected the ruling from Judge Saul's to be so strong and definitive as it turned out to be now governor Bush spoke to reporters earlier today at the mansion this was before Judge Saul's his ruling and he refused to do what his running mate has already done and that's call on Al Gore to concede I do believe I have won this election I believe

that one that on the first count and on the second count and on the third count but the vice president's gonna have to make the decisions that he thinks are necessary and I know that he'll put the interests of the country will be important in this decision that you dislike he would be in mind the interests of the country the code word today for Al Gore to concede that coming from governor Bush governor Bush during that photo opportunity also referred to Dick Cheney as his vice president today and said that at his direction Dick Cheney will be going up to Capitol Hill tomorrow to meet with Republican leaders and other Republicans to discuss continuing to push forward with their legislative agenda now on the transition campaign sources of saying tonight the

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campaign sources of saying tonight the governor Bush is still weighing whether or not he should actually publicly announce more transition staff and maybe even cabinet announcements later this week as to whether all of this is over one adviser said tonight the bush team is desperately in search of that moment of celebration but they've seen a lot of volatility in this race so far and it's a little early said one to start spraying the bubble Tom thanks very much David Gregory tonight in Austin Texas in Washington once again tonight with the vice president NBC's Claire Shipman there what about the mood in the gore camp well not quite the same as it is in Austin obviously Tom in fact Gore's team had already concluded Judge Saul's was likely to rule against them and they spent the day making phone calls to Capitol Hill two prominent Democrats trying to keep everybody on board through that appeal to Florida Supreme Court gore himself spent part of his day at his White House office making transition plans but we're told also watching the ruling the gore campaign very blunt tonight that they have two shots left to pull this off one with the Florida Supreme Court where they've had some luck but they're not at all confident the other what you heard Dan Abrams talking about those two absentee ballot cases after that said what said one aide it could be over and it could be over at the end of this week Tom Claire the vice president has been publicly at least so upbeat what reasons does he have for optimism tonight you know it's interesting friends say it's more that he is determined right now to see this through to what he thinks is a logical conclusion that he has already decided it's more likely he's going to lose than win still there aren't any concession speeches being drafted right now as one top aide said tonight he is just not there yet Tom all right thanks very much NBC's clerkship you counter in Florida has been always a moving target since November ninth two days after the presidential election george w bush's lead over al gore was reported to be more than 1,700 votes it slipped to 930 votes on november 18th after the overseas absentee ballots were counted to 537 when the Secretary of State certified the vote now the margin is 154 according to the Florida State Supreme Court that number was changing again today until the US Supreme Court

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again today until the US Supreme Court stopped the count we have 3 reports from different counties which had to stop the counting we begin with NBC's Kelly O'Donnell in Tallahassee good evening Kelly hello John the expectations here cut short the counting operation at the Leon County Public Library was talking about a brisk pace the thinking the miami-dade ballots the last of them would be counted by about 9:00 o'clock tonight 17 hours ahead of the deadline but it was not to be from the library loading dock 9,000 miami-dade ballots made a u-turn about an hour after this day a return trip to the vault at the Leon County Courthouse the cutoff to the county set off a ripple effect but word traveled not so fast US Supreme Court okay then proof on paper we're directed by judge Lewis to cease all manual recounts and desist until further order of the court a sure sign it was halted the Miami Dade County team of eight judges escorted out by sheriff's deputies no comment on their unfinished business more proof from the bench judge Terry Lewis who set the counting plan into motion just before midnight last night called it off with this order the court hereby directs that all manual recounts cease and desist until further notice of the court that ground will halt the ballot sorting as well the process of finding those undervotes but the order did not stop lawyers for the vice president from doing their own math we were clearly on a path for Vice President Gore and Senator Lieberman to make up the difference and to pull ahead had the count been fully completed no official figures but demo Kratts

pointed their own partial tally claiming after 13 counties Democratic observers report a net gain of 58 Gore votes the bush team disagrees with those figures but refuses to put out its own numbers saying judge Terry Lewis forbid any partial tallies New York Governor

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any partial tallies New York Governor George Pataki a Republican observer during some of today's hand count says the gore team broke the rules not going to tell you what those numbers work suffice it to say they're dramatically different from the the gore teams numbers but I do not intend unlike them to violate judge Louis's direct order but late this evening lawyers for governor Bush asked Judge Lewis to reprimand the Democrats suggesting they'd be held in contempt of court for talking about the votes judge Lewis did not get into that fight telling both sides to follow his orders and keep quiet about the vote John NBC's Kelly O'Donnell in Tallahassee thanks NBC's Jim Avila spent the day watching this drama unfold in Tampa on Florida's west coast good evening Jim evening John adrenaline was flowing here election officials at work on Saturday forced to go home however well without ever counting a vote but they say they did learn one thing this hand count can be done sleeves rolled up eyes focused final instructions under way and how to count more than 5,000 undervotes in Tampa's Hillsborough County [Music] hillsboro first ballot box actually on the table suddenly the count halted before it could officially begin on orders from another court this time the highest before I could open that box I received word that the Supreme Court had told us to stop an immediate outbursts from Republican observers and demonstrators signaled the C had Saad once again in the Florida vote count oral argument is scheduled for Monday as we understand so so what we are going to do at this point is not begin the count hillsboro x' 5553 under votes were separated by machine using special software spitting out ballots with no vote for president the guideline here

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vote for president the guideline here was to be so-called dimpled Chad's to be set aside if it's one corner it comes to the canvassing board for the canvassing board to determine across Tampa Bay and st. Petersburg's Pinellas County another forty five hundred under votes they've been counting for two hours when ordered to stop 224 ballots counted all but three remained no votes gore picked up two Bush won across Florida a huge job but one the Supervisor of Elections in Hillsborough County the one with the largest number of under votes outside miami-dade says can be finished in less than 24 hours if and when word comes from the next court we could finish up a the count of 5500 manual ballots in half a day an encouraging note for the Al Gore team which is still battling the clock John NBC's Jim oblah in Tampa thanks now to Jacksonville in northeastern Florida and NBC's Kerry Sanders Kerry well here in Duval County elections officials never thought they would be able to meet the sunday deadline so today the US Supreme Court actually gave him a break in Duvall County special hardware and software was brought in from Miami today the first problem was to find the more than 4900 undervotes they're mixed in with the 291,000 ballots here but no sooner was that equipment in place when one of the canvassing board members got a page from his wife I returned her telephone call and she said there was breaking news on television that the Supreme Court had issued a stay so she held the phone up to the television I listened to it and then we started scrambling around trying to find something on the internet in the computer room technicians were unloading the ballot boxes when they were told stop everything the Democrats are upset that election officials here have stopped everything why not continue finding the under vote ballots they ask and then not count them

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ballots they ask and then not count them unless the US Supreme Court says they should I believe stay means stay and I think we have to wait for a court order for further instruction Gore's lawyers here worried that if counting does resume they will run out of time we're not talking at this moment about counting we're talking about getting ready to count in Osceola County with 642 undervotes they are slightly further along some of the under vote ballots are now sorted but tonight no one counting them and unless there is a Supreme Court order no one will and tonight until there is a final decision the ballots here in Duval County

will remain under lock and key John NBC's Kerry Sanders in Jacksonville Kerry thanks good evening everyone 33 days after the election the nation's highest court is facing a momentous decision which could determine the next president tomorrow lawyers for Al Gore and George W Bush head into the US Supreme Court in Washington to argue the case the bush team is asking the justices to reverse Florida's Supreme Court decision which ordered a recount of thousands of disputed ballots the gore team claims voters have a right to have those ballots counted so in Florida the counting remains on hold while the country waits for a decision we begin our coverage with NBC's Kelly O'Donnell in Tallahassee good evening Kelly John tonight the Democratic National Committee is flying in voters from South Florida and urging others to make the drive to Tallahassee a show of support for the hand counts to begin again on the eve of arguments before the US Supreme Court candles in place of counting tonight Democrats from around Florida use the public library the scene of the halted hand count as a backdrop for protest Democrats here to urge Florida's Republican dominated legislature not to intervene when lawmakers hold a special session tomorrow to consider naming a bush slate

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tomorrow to consider naming a bush slate of electoral college voters since he was certified the winner here in Florida Republican lawmakers say if the US Supreme Court does not resolve the election they will act we must proceed and we must be ready and that's exactly what we need to we need to do earlier today a special delivery to the US Supreme Court under uniformed guard 18 boxes of evidence and exhibits from the election contest trial flown in from Florida everything but the ballots there have been no orders from any court requiring that the balance be transferred from here to any other place those 9,000 disputed miami-dade undervotes abruptly packed and sealed Saturday when the hand count was called off remain in Tallahassee no comment today from Vice President Gore attending church while his top lawyer suggested the Tuesday deadline for Florida's selection of electors could slide the some extent both sides have already said this is going to go beyond December 12th in fact the Florida Legislature is talking about possibly taking some action on December 13 or December 14 so I think the December 12th deadline is important but it's not nearly as critical as the December 18th deadline December 18th is when the Electoral College actually meets today in Austin George W Bush stepped outside briefly to greet a crowd gathered at the governor's mansion while his advisor former Secretary of State James Baker was holding firm on both dates you can't extend that deadline it's it's in the Constitution or at least it's in federal law making that point in another way today Bush running-mate Dick Cheney visited their transition office just outside Washington another subtle but public way to indicate their view the end is near the vice president's lawyer David Boies acknowledged today the urgency saying if the US Supreme Court does not lift its day allowing the vote

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does not lift its day allowing the vote counting to continue in his words it's the end of the road John NBC's Kelly O'Donnell thanks now to Washington and NBC's chief law car spotted an abrams on the steps of the US Supreme Court dan what do we expect to hear from the bush team tomorrow well the bush team has argued that the Florida Supreme Court opinion was out of line they refer to it as a crazy quilt ruling they say there were no uniform standards that rules were changed the effect quote it has created a regime virtually guaranteed to incite controversy suspicion and lack of confidence I was expected they also said that there were violations of the US Constitution and a federal statute but now they say there's another problem they say this opinion was built on a nullified case that Florida ruling the US Supreme Court vacated earlier this week they say without that none of these recounts could have or would have happened John and Dan this could be an uphill battle for the gore team right no question the court is already implied that there's an inclination towards ruling Forbush they're in this essence saying there was nothing wrong here with the Florida Supreme Court's ruling that there's no federal issue here no rules were changed and they say quote the court engaged in a routine exercise of statutory interpretation that construed the Florida election code now as for the lack of standards those dimpled hanging chads they say that's really the norm in most states in the nation and it's not unique to Florida John NBC's Dan Abrams in Washington dan thank you now a brief program note NBC news coverage of tomorrow's historic event begins at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time when the

Supreme Court session is set to start the justices will release an audio tape of the proceedings shortly after the 90 minute hearing ends and we will bring you that to the moment it becomes available to Capitol Hill now where it is feared that feuds stemming from this

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is feared that feuds stemming from this battle for the White House will continue long after inauguration day here's NBC's Joe Johns the super charged atmosphere the next president will have to live with is a hot topic on Capitol Hill these days the only way that either man can establish legitimacy is to reach out and try to reach the kind of consensus that is so critical among parties and among all people it's important for us in the Congress who are not happy with the final outcome to cooperate in trying to to be civil with those who did win but how to do that especially with narrow majorities in the incoming 107th Congress particularly in the Senate where there will be a 50/50 split if Gore loses and Joe Lieberman returns to Capitol Hill Democrats want a power-sharing arrangement co-equal status Republicans offer concessions but you can't have coal everything because it basically you could checkmate each other at every turn Republicans say they would still control the agenda however because Vice President Dick Cheney would cast the tie-breaking votes if Bush wins the White House the vote would be 51 to 50 there would be a republic majority Republicans stand to gain an extra seat if Gore wins no worries about a 50/50 split still with both parties sending their rank-and-file even their staffs to wage the PR war in battlefield Florida the tension and partisan anger has been raised to new heights some say even worse than during the impeachment of President Clinton the Republicans and Democrats have different approaches to top agenda items including tax cuts Social Security reform and both sides say they want cooperation not gridlock I think the people want us to work together very badly legislatively both sides in Congress appear poised to wage new battles on the same old terms one significant difference is that there will be more Democrats in both houses Joe John's NBC News the Capitol flames

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Joe John's NBC News the Capitol flames with Tom Brokaw good evening once again the long drawn-out contest for the presidency is on hold tonight awaiting the judgment of the US Supreme Court which today had a spirited exchange with warriors representing Vice President Gore and Texas Governor Bush at issue did the Florida State Supreme Court go beyond its authority when it ordered a statewide recount of the so-called undervotes ballots on which no choice for president was detected that's the legal issue the political consequence of course is what has all of us in suspense tonight well the court's ruling sent Governor George W Bush to the White House or Vice President Al Gore if the count goes against the vice president it is over NBC's Pete Williams was in the courtroom for us today people Tom good evening tonight the justices worked to decide a case unlike any other in the courts history and judging by the questions during today's dramatic oral arguments many legal scholars think the justices are very skeptical of the way the Florida Court ordered the latest recount outside the court gore demonstrators show they keep the faith alive hoping the justices will revive the court-ordered recount and let the search for votes resume but inside the Supreme Court not much encouragement for Gore's lawyer David Boies problem one for Gore a US Supreme Court that just two days ago voted five to four to stop the countin hear an urgent appeal of the Florida ruling and that just a week ago shot down the previous Florida Supreme Court ruling inside the packed courtroom today some justices wondered how could the state court issue this new ruling that seems to be based on the old one that was just set aside without reference to the point at all that their opinion had been vacated I just didn't know how that work the goal for boys try to peel away at least one from the five vote majority possibly swing justices Sandra Day

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possibly swing justices Sandra Day O'Connor or Anthony Kennedy problem two for Gore the US Constitution which says state legislators by passing laws direct how presidential electors are chosen O'Connor seems troubled at the Florida Supreme Court in ordering the recount went beyond state law in this one context not when courts review laws generally for general elections but in the context of selection of presidential electors

don't isn't there a big red flag up there watch out problem three for Gore a federal law that says the vote must be counted according to laws in place before the election Kennedy wonders if the Florida Court violated that if we assume the legislature would run contrary to the new law prohibition in the statute wouldn't the Supreme Court do it if it does exactly the same thing at least two of the justices seemed to be searching for a compromise that would set aside the Florida Court ruling and send the case back with instructions to rule again this time with strict standards for counting partially punched ballot cars but problem four in a question posed to boys just exactly what would that standard be what in your opinion would be the most commonly used in the 33 states or whatever or in your opinion the fairest Uniform substandard and I think we would have a responsibility to tell the Florida courts what to do about it one that assumption what would you tell them to do about it well I think that's a very hard question the justices seem determined to rule quickly well aware of the coming deadlines for choosing presidential electors and late tonight the Florida State Supreme Court reissues its original decision the one that first extended the manual recount deadline the gore lawyers instantly notify the justices here of that Tom thanks very much NBC's Pete Williams tonight then of course there is the tantalizing proposition could there be in effect two rulings from this Court two justices were the focuses of a great deal of

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were the focuses of a great deal of attention today the swing voters justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Anthony Kennedy our chief legal affairs correspondent Dan Abrams tonight has more on the guessing game dan well Tom for justice O'Connor in particular she had a lot of trouble with the Florida court's ruling she asked a lot of questions on a number of fronts first did the Florida Court show enough deference to the Florida Legislature second did the Florida Court ignore the US Supreme Court's ruling of last week which erased that previous Florida Supreme Court ruling wasn't this one she asked essentially built on that previous erased one-third isn't the standard for overturning an election higher than the gore team has suggested don't there have to be substantial irregularities with the election not just the possibility that their legal votes out there and while Justice Kennedy offered some hope by talking about what the standard might be if those votes are counted he too seemed to think the law was changed Tom thanks very much Dan Abrams tell us about some other scenarios however that might be existing for that court tonight as they make their decisions well there's always the possibility for a compromise they could say we think there's an equal protection problem here yet we don't want to overturn the Florida Court so they could say let's send it back to the Florida Court and we'll define what is a vote chad's and dimples that undoubtedly would be a victory for gore even if the standard is very very high it means Al Gore is still alive Tom all right thanks very much Dan Abrams tonight we'll look for that possibility as well obviously outside the court today plenty of disagreement among the country's best-known legal scholars over the courts proper role in this dispute we talked to two of them today Jeffrey Rosen a law professor at George Washington University of Law School and Bruce Fein a former Justice Department official in the Reagan administration they're thinking tonight in their own words I feel as strongly as possible that the Supreme Court should stay out of this all principles of judicial restraint of legitimacy of settling disputes in the political branches rather than the courts are

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branches rather than the courts are threatened by this decision some members of the court seemed to have a powerful sense that they need to rush in and save the country from its crisis but whether or not they're able to do that is something that many of us are very skeptical of the Supreme Court doesn't choose the cases this isn't an instance in fact the Supreme Court never runs around you know like Don Quixote looking for a windmill to tilt that it's obviously something that they were not eager to take on but it is true they have a jurisdiction to decide constitutional questions of federal statutory questions as being the final determinant of law this is a moment of peril for the Supreme Court there's a grave risk that if the Supreme Court divides along partisan lines it will be perceived as being motivated by politics rather than law it's ironic isn't it that on this day when the cameras aren't allowed in the justices may expose themselves far more naked Lee than any cameras actually could that is the institution in which the people of the United States will most readily accept the rule of law and its decisions over time it has shown that it is far superior in its neutrality than all

the alternative choices it is the final word law professors Jeffrey Rosen and former Justice Department official Bruce flying tonight in their own words if one of the courts swing justices is persuaded by the gore side argument and the cases in fact sent back to Florida what then NBC's Lisa Myers not on Capitol Hill with some answers for us Lisa Tom if the Supreme Court does not definitively settle this case and the battle resumed then we quickly descended to what many called the doomsday scenario a bloody confrontation in Congress today Florida election Supervisors meeting in Tampa wait to hear if the recount will resume and worry that it now cannot be completed before tomorrow's December 12th deadline for appointing electors that cannot be challenged give us enough

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that cannot be challenged give us enough time to get it done and let us know what the final real deadline is but what any recount have to be done by the December 12th deadline many experts say no December 12 is not a real deadline because the slate of electors can be chose chosen after December 12 also today the Florida Legislature takes another step toward naming a slate of electors pledged to Bush setting the stage for a showdown in Florida courts ultimately certify Al Gore the winner this is not just a hot potato it's a radioactive hot potato Democrats are outraged hold the move brazen the Florida Legislature would be the first state legislature in over a century to attempt to overturn the lawfully determined votes of its people so then what happens in January Congress would be forced to choose between two sets of electors one named by the legislature for Bush the other for Gore and many congressional leaders say that would be a disaster because most likely the republican-controlled house would choose the bush slate the Senate the gore slate with the vice president casting the deciding vote in the Senate so with both chambers split who wins whichever electors have been certified by the governor of Florida Jeb Bush Democrats warned that would create a poisonous atmosphere this would not be the way to go and I hope and pray that they will not do this with wounds from the impeachment battle still not totally healed both parties fear that the doomsday scenario would doom the next session of Congress Tom thanks very much NBC's Lisa Myers tonight Vice President Gore was not commenting publicly today but he is said to be taking comfort from those legal scholars who believe the US Supreme Court had no right to stop the vote counting going on in Florida and that this was more a political than a legal judgment on the part of the High Court for his part Governor Bush talking for a change and NBC's David Gregory is in Austin tonight David well Tom tonight Governor Bush's closest legal and political advisors believe

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legal and political advisors believe that the argument went so well today before the Supreme Court that it's not reasonable to expect not just five but perhaps as many as seven justices will side with them but even as the bush team contemplates how to graciously accept victory no one is jumping the gun one top advisor saying tonight quote everyone's learned to be cautious no one more cautious than the Texas governor himself arriving at the state capitol at 10:30 on this historic morning Bush is careful not to share his feelings but the High Court's decision to stop the hand counting over the weekend has seen is such a huge victory which his advisers are already discussing where to stage a victory round and have started drafting his speech still top aides sensitive about appearing presumptuous and says Bush has not yet reviewed any remarks at 1:00 p.m. today the argument over Bush speaks to his lead lawyer Ted Olson no predictions but Bush's told it went well Bush gets more details from top political aides campaign chairman Don Evans and chief strategist Karl Rove who were inside the Supreme Court I would call them cautious with cautiously optimistic all the while a touch of iron it's the other governor Bush who makes it to the White House brother Jeb present for a bill signing with the president today James Jones when asked if he's spoken to his brother Marvin had a nice conversation with Marvin he's doing well I'm glad you asked with the very common levity aside the mood within Bush's inner circle is still very serious tonight top advisors voicing concerns about the to absentee ballot cases still on appeal in Florida they could rear their heads even if Bush prevails in the United States Supreme Court says one top advisor tonight even if for loses in the high court they don't believe a concession is automatic quote he still has other options Tom thanks very much NBC's di clay News with Tom Brokaw good evening it's like

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Tom Brokaw good evening it's like waiting for a jury to come in but in this case the jurors of the nine justices of the US Supreme Court and the courtroom is all of America the two women and seven men of the highest court in the land remained coy stirred in their stately offices tonight and we have no idea where they are and the historic assignment that they have undertaken have they decided for Texas governor george w bush by determining the Florida recount should end now and forevermore or is it for Al Gore resume the count under new rules or something in between are they arguing writing politicking only the justices and their clerks know for sure the rest of us have no choice but to wait all this on the day when states were to certify their electors but only Florida remains uncertain let's begin with NBC's Pete Williams outside the court tonight and peed in that building behind you the lights are burning that's right Tom the rhythms of the buildings suggest a decision is still possible yet tonight and it doesn't get any more tense than this the Justice is working for a second night on their historic decision while the candidates their lawyers and everyone else wonders the same thing what's taking so long on the second floor well away from reporters jammed into the courts press room the justices and their three dozen clerks work on one of the most important decisions in the courts history outside nervous supporters of both candidates hope for some early word all this waiting for a decision in a case that was after all argued only yesterday Thank You mr. Olson the case is submitted what are the courts options one uphold the Florida Supreme Court ruling that would be a flat-out win for Gore and would allow the recount to resume but many legal scholars also think that's the least likely especially since the justices moved so quickly on Saturday to stop the recount and now the court seems in no urgent rush to issue its decision with each passing hour the Supreme Court is suggesting there's no reason to restart the action because we're just gonna let this play out in a way that's going to

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this play out in a way that's going to end up with Bush inevitably winning the election anyway option two just the opposite overrule the Florida Court ruling that would be a total victory for George Bush completely wiping away any remaining legal authority for a recount after watching Monday's oral argument and hearing several of the justices attacked the Florida ruling many legal experts think that's the most likely and the third option some kind of legal compromise setting aside the Florida ruling but instructing the court there to rewrite its decision possibly by setting some clearer statewide standard for counting partially punched ballot cards that assumes justices like sooner or Breyer from the courts liberal wing can persuade one of the swing votes like O'Connor or Kennedy to join them and many constitutional scholars say the liberals might be pushing hard for that option arguing there are doubts about whether the Florida Supreme Court ruling overstepped the bounds of state law Florida election law gives the Florida Supreme Court almost total discretion as to how to remedy election problems still as the day grows later Al Gore's lawyers say they're becoming more pessimistic believing that delay cannot be good for them Tom thanks very much NBC's Pete Williams tonight while the waiting game was going on in Washington and across the country in Florida the heavily Republican state legislature was taking action as promised prepared to bail out Governor Bush if the court goes against him NBC David bloom is Intel aha see again tonight David Tom tonight we've learned that the Florida State Legislature may delay until Thursday a final vote on presidential electors that would by Republicans an extra day before they take the politically risky step of taking this election their own hands 79 yeas 41 nays mr. speaker and so by your vote the resolution passes today the Florida state legislature through governor Bush a lifelong Bush might not need it but just in case every single Republican in

01:26:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=5160s)

just in case every single Republican in the Florida House plus two Democrats vote to name a pro Bush slate of presidential electors even if the US Supreme Court allows the recount to resume and Vice President Al Gore winds up with more votes here in five hours of contentious debate Republicans are unapologetic but it's also clear they hope the nation's highest court rules quickly for Bush and takes them off the hook the 2000 election is spiraling out of control and we must stop it now I would hope that the United States Supreme Court may render a move well we did today Democrats outnumbered in the house and in the Florida Senate

which votes tomorrow today accused the Republicans of trying to steal the election for Bush the only thing missing is a smoke-filled room this is brass knuckles partisan politics at its very worst in the state legislature and in the Florida courts Gore's options are dwindling today a unanimous Florida Supreme Court's refuses to even consider an appeal by Democrats to toss out 25,000 absentee ballots where some ballot applications were filled out improperly these irregularities do not require the voiding of all absentee ballots last night Bush's top advisors raced back to Tallahassee they don't want a repeat of Saturday's recounts but it's been an anxious days as campaign chairman Don Evans knowing Bush could still lose in the US Supreme Court it's a possibility and you want to be ready for it I mean you don't want to be you know thousand miles away from here if it Divi does happened that they come down and decide there needs to be a recount we want to be ready for it and the man spearheading Gore's Florida at four degrees it's been a nerve-wracking day I think we have the law on our side I think we have the facts on our side and I think the US Supreme Court will agree with that we'll get the counts under way and those counsel show that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman got more votes here in Florida bottom line both Democratic and Republican counting teams of fan across the state tonight's in case the recount resumes and Vice President Gore

01:28:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=5281s)

recount resumes and Vice President Gore gets one last chance Tom thanks very much NBC's David bloom but if the court rules in favor of Bush the gore camp knows the fight is over however there are some Democrats out there who say there is one more last-ditch scenario that could be tried based in part on Gore's win and the national popular vote try to scoop up a few of Bush's electors something that Bush people naturally are trying to prevent NBC's Lisa Myers is on Capitol Hill tonight Lisa Tom as we say many Democrats do want Gore to concede if he loses at the United States Supreme Court but not all some favor a last-gasp effort to try to hijack some of Bush's electors and persuade them to vote for Gore even as workman billed the inaugural platform on which the next president will stand some Democrats favored a last-ditch gambit to secure that spot for Gore if he doesn't win in court why should he concede as long as it's still possible that electors might change their mind which they're free to do Democrats would have to peel off electors by December 18th when they gather at state capitals to cast their votes for president if Bush wins Florida he would have 271 electoral votes compared to 267 for Gore with 270 needed for victory Democrats hope some Bush electors might think Gore has been treated unfairly and say to themselves this isn't the right thing I should do the right thing I will vote for Al Gore even though it was previously thought I was gonna vote for Bush and if three people did that then Gore would win anyway of the 29 states which Bush won 14 do not find electors to vote for the candidate who carried the state longtime Democratic operative Bob Beckel says he'll send Bush electors a statistical analysis next week he claims shows Bohr really won Florida by more than 28,000 votes if nothing else I would like to have it on their conscience when they cast their vote for Bush last month Gore

01:30:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=5400s)

cast their vote for Bush last month Gore disavowed efforts to switch electors but some don't take that as the last word I will not accept the support of any elector pledge the governor Bush still the Bush campaign is keeping close tabs on all its electors even party veterans like Chuck clay of Georgia they've been logistical calls they've been calls from the campaign have been calls from the RNC and we've had our own calls from the state party to obviously make sure people are plugged in is this scenario far-fetched absolutely but Tom as you know so were many of the twists and turns of the last 35 days all now part of this most unusual chapter in American history indeed thanks very much Lisa Myer Sonata was in New York this is NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw good evening tonight 35 days after he first prepared a concession speech Vice President Al Gore will give up his long fight for the presidency in a nationally televised speech and Texas Governor George W Bush will follow with his first speech to the country as president-elect what has been the most bitterly contested presidential election in modern history is now expected to turn to notes of grace and reconciliation so on this day after the states chose their electors here's where the electoral college map ends up george w bush won 30 states with 271 electoral votes won more than needed to win al gore 120 states for a total of 267 electoral votes gore won the national popular vote by more than three hundred thirty-seven

thousand votes that's a razor thin margin out of about one hundred and three million that were cast and the final florida tally was hanging on to his wins certified by the Florida Secretary of State November 26th by a margin of 537 votes NBC's David Gregory is with George W Bush in Texas tonight Claire Shipman with the

01:32:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=5520s)

Texas tonight Claire Shipman with the vice president and NBC's Pete Williams at the US Supreme Court again tonight David let's begin with you and the man who is going to be the president-elect well Tom tonight's speech is just the beginning of Bush's ReachOut effort tonight a close advisor says Bush wants to meet personally with Al Gore in Washington and expects to do so but not before early next week meantime the transition now accelerates with Bush prepared to name top White House staff positions as early as tomorrow [Music] at last a reason to celebrate this morning that aides say the man poised to be president is restrained not jubilant first thing this morning Bush calls his parents and welcomed up thanks for the wake-up call but the real drama last night behind closed doors at the governor's mansion the anxious wait for the Supreme Court's decision 9:52 p.m. the ruling comes down as Bush's point man in Florida James Baker asleep when first told the order is imminent quickly gathers legal team and monitors the television coverage it does appear as I look through here to be a 5-4 opinion Bush and his team begin to burn up the telephone lines between Austin and Tallahassee campaign chairman Don Evans urgently realized the lawyers interpretations to the governor but not finding any clear winning language Evans tells his longtime friend buddy I've got to call you back we're looking now to see if there are dissenters Bush lawyers keep reading to instructed to comb through the opinion as if they were gore lawyers looking for a loophole amid the confusion President Bush in Houston calls Baker his old friend anxious for clues Jimmy what does this mean the former president asks but Baker can't offer any assurances yet so Bush announces he'll watch for a while and then go back to bed by about 10:30 Baker is satisfied they want calls the Texas Governor to say there's some wiggle room for Gore but we're okay still Baker tells the bush lawyers to be prepared for one

01:34:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=5641s)

bush lawyers to be prepared for one final Gore appeal and by early this morning top Bush advisors still don't believe it's over not after these five weeks says one quote I won't believe he's president until he says so help me God and takes his hand off the Bible Tom thanks very much NBC's David Gregory tonight the bush team in Florida began to relax only this morning when vice president Gore's campaign manager Bill Daley called his counterpart the governor's close friend Don Evans to confirm the vice president had decided to give up the fight it had been a long emotional night for Al Gore and his family more on that now from NBC's Claire Shipman Claire Tom Gore's aides say they're absolutely certain that tonight Gore speech will be magnanimous that he will be a statesman he may be struggling now even as he writes his speech with his desire to express again his firm belief that votes need to be counted but again they think the tone will be a call to unite the nation because Gore was working on his speech his aides described last night the Supreme Court decision and how Gore came to decide to concede Gore aides say when the decision is released it is quote total chaos his legal team struggling to figure out whether they've been shut down Gore according to advisors stunned at the decision he'd been alone with his family around the dining room table no longer expecting a ruling because of a late hour initially as he consults with his legal team by phone he thinks he can still fight and he quickly becomes angry at what he thinks is a quote bad decision and even considers a public attack on the partisan nature of the court and an appeal to the Florida Supreme Court but at midnight Gore's aides believe he's likely to concede still he says he'll sleep on it at 2:00 a.m. he calls one top advisor to say I think I know what I have to do by morning the decision is made and gore is even cracking a few jokes he first tells his campaign

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jokes he first tells his campaign chairman he's changed his mind about withdrawing and then laughs ticking off how he wants to handle his concession he then calls his team in Florida to thank them and praised their work he invites them to fly up and join him at his home after his speech tonight you'll recognize that he jokes

it's the one with all the people holding signs that say get out of Dick Cheney's house now Gore will deliver his speech tonight at the old executive office building at his ceremonial office here the building right behind me instead of his residence because at his residence pre-planned Christmas parties one of which he will be attending later on and one more point home we're told you heard David Gregory mentioned that the two men will likely meet at some point early next week Bill Daley has been working on that from this end but we're told it might not happen this week because Gore might like to take a couple of days off Tom thanks very much NBC's Claire Shipman last night's lengths and complicated decision from the US Supreme Court was still reverberating today as legal scholars politicians and court junkies debated its strengths and weaknesses and it's lasting impact on the court as an institution NBC's Pete Williams has more on that tonight beep good evening tom the release of that ruling set off a mad scramble to figure out what it means tonight nearly 24 hours later the immediate impact is clear no recount but many legal scholars wonder about the long-term effects as reporters bound down the marble steps at 9:52 p.m. inside the court even some of the justices clerks rushed to the press office to get their own copies of the historic decision the vote 5-2 for Rehnquist O'Connor Kennedy Scalia and Thomas in the majority Stephen Souter Ginsburg and Breyer dissenting the courts usual conservative liberal split an opinion unsigned for the court as a whole likely a group effort the three conservatives file an accompanying opinion but interestingly the courts two centrists O'Connor and Kennedy the critical swing votes don't sign their

01:38:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=5880s)

critical swing votes don't sign their names to any of it the ruling strikes down the Florida Supreme Court recount plan is unconstitutional because counties use different standards for evaluating partially punched ballots not only that it says the Florida Supreme Court didn't allow enough time to do the recount right starting at December 8th when it had to be finished by the 12th not long enough the court says to allow for the inevitable lawsuits challenging the result today the top gore lawyer says the legal battle is over we've had an appeal we've taken that appeal there is no appeal from the United States Supreme Court the dissents in the dramatic ruling are stinging Justice Breyer says the split decision risks undermining public confidence in the court itself but a former Supreme Court Clerk says the court deserves credit for bringing the election battled to a close so something had to be done and unfortunately it had to be done by the US Supreme Court I'm sure they would have preferred not to have had to step in if they could have avoided it even so some legal scholars are wondering tonight about unintended consequences they say the decisions attack on differing standards for counting ballots could lead losing candidates nationwide to challenge the use of differing voting methods if in a national election of voter alleges that by living in Florida his vote is treated differently because of recounting procedures differences in rules than a voter whose lives say in Oklahoma it's quite possible that he could use some of the language in this opinion to mount such a challenge this is actually not the last lawsuit over the election to reach the US Supreme Court two others are pending over military ballots and Dick Cheney's residence but tonight the US Supreme Court declined to put them on the fast track meaning they'll have no impact Tom thank you very much NBC's Pete Williams tonight in the end the majority of the court decided this was as much about the calendar as it was about anything else December 12th the day that Florida and other states were to certify their presidential electors NBC's Dan Abrams tonight on that critical part of the ruling Dan Tom the presidency came down to a cut-off a deadline a narrow

01:40:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=6001s)

to a cut-off a deadline a narrow majority of the justices believing no votes could be counted after December the 12th why an obscure federal statute from 1887 created to avoid confusion at the electoral college and to encourage states to pick their electors early it says determination of all controversies over the appointment of electors shall have been made at least six days before the time fixed for the meeting of the electors here that means December the 12th and yet the gore team has always argued that the vote should never have been cut off on December the 9th and that is what is so frustrating for them Tom but then in the end what we had was a collision between the calendar and the 14th Amendment of the Constitution guaranteeing equal protection under the law no question and what the court in essence said was there's no way they could have

repaired that problem by the time of the deadline again though the gore team would say that issue was posed the first time this case was in front of the Supreme Court why didn't they deal with it then then we still would have met the deadline Tom thanks very much NBC's Dan Abrams tonight in just five weeks the new president will be sworn in and a new Congress will convene as well 1 evenly divided in the Senate 50/50 and in the house of very small Republican majority given that division and the protracted presidential race can anything be accomplished NBC's Lisa Myers tonight on Capitol Hill Lisa Tom both Democrats and Republicans mostly cooled their rhetoric today but the last 35 days were so venomous left the warring factions here so deeply divided that one Republican says Bush may feel like mayor of Beirut Dick Cheney Criss crosses the Capitol today meets privately with Republicans talks about how to bridge the great divide a particular concern to Cheney some senators say how to reach out to African Americans who voted overwhelmingly for Gore and even today say Gore not Bush really won the election we know what

01:42:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=6122s)

really won the election we know what unfairness is it's not the first time that we've had to score keep a steel victory away from us but he said have a tremendous job in trying to heal the wounds other Liberal Democrats such as Iowa's Tom Harkin promise to work with Bush but I think there will be a cloud there will be a cloud over the presidency despite many public pledges of bipartisanship a veteran Democrat predicts Bush will find it tough to govern the next election is vengeance time and 2002 2004 you're gonna see groups of people out there determined to get their pound of flesh on the Republican side great pressure from conservatives today House whip Tom DeLay hails Bush is our rightful and legitimate leader he says Republicans who control both the white house in Congress for the first time in 45 years now have an unfettered path for their agenda conservatives have delivered four george w bush now conservatives want bush to deliver for them Senate Republican leader Trent Lott urges optimism there's a great potential for people to have resentment or say oh no we're gonna resist this in every way but it shouldn't be that way doesn't have to be that way Washington career veterans cannot remember any president who faced such a treacherous path in Congress Bush begins his high-wire act tonight Tom thanks very much NBC's Lisa Myers tonight if there is a common reaction to what we have been through it is this the system of electing presidents in this country is in desperate need of an overhaul from tighter laws to better ballots and more efficient machines NBC's national correspondent Jim Avila on that's not decision 2000 say experts will change how Americans vote the punch cards and Chad's that push the floor to winner deep into the margin of error may have decided

01:44:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=6240s)

the margin of error may have decided their last national election the punch card system has got to go but that's just the beginning the bigger question will America's election system measure up to the equal protection issue the court raised in its opinion specifically the courts majority wrote after the current counting it is likely legislative bodies nationwide will examine ways to improve the mechanisms and machinery for voting right now Americans voted at least five kinds of machines punchcards developed 40 years ago still the most popular used in 37% of the country more than 72,000 precincts the much more accurate optical stand machines are used in 47,000 precincts old-fashioned levers still count votes in 41,000 American precincts but only 14,000 precincts use state of the art touchscreen electronic machines and 5,500 precincts still use X's on paper ballots equal protection one-person one-vote a concept exposed as nearly impossible in places where punch cards are used in some Miami precincts as many as 1 in 20 ballots had no vote for President on them that's five times more than in counties that use more modern voting systems those older punch cards are often used in urban areas poor precincts african-american leaders today call that a violation of equal protection we need a more modern system to count votes and we need a fairer system that preserves each voters right to exercise our right to vote so will a fairer system mean more votes and minority communities more Democratic votes it gives the Democrats a tiny bit of a partisan advantage I think that is so minuscule given what the public good would be good and expensive the Federal Election Commission estimates 9 billion dollars for a uniform modern system the price to restore confidence in America's vote and many say extend equal protection to voters across the country Jim Avila NBC News Tampa

01:46:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=6362s)

NBC News in-depth tonight behind the scenes at the United States Supreme Court one of the most secret places in American public life through her reporting and interviews with former clerks even a rare public statement today by the Chief Justice NBC's Andrea Mitchell has put together a picture of what these last few history days have been like her in-depth report tonight a rare insight into the Supreme Court pressure cooker Clarence Thomas with high school students today as I told one of my colleagues hadn't pulled an all-nighter since law school the last few weeks have been exhausting I think for the entire court but in a lot of ways it shows the strength of our system of government and court insiders say it shows the deep divisions within the court what Breyer calls a self-inflicted wound as early as Saturday say court insiders deep frustration among the minority Stevens Souter Ginsburg Breyer unable to persuade the majority to let Florida keep counting the most important argument that was rejected at conference was that the Supreme Court had no business hearing this case Stephens say former clerks likely knows there's no hope of papering over the divide starts writing a strong dissent but Breyer and Souter try to forge a compromise Souter likely with memos Breyer face-to-face they would have been talking to other justices and they would have been using their clerks as a form of communication I see some anger some resignation absolutely I also see some genuine effort to find common ground and some success at finding some common ground at least among seven of the justices but not on the key issue of resuming the count the possible swing justices are going to reject any middle ground isn't there a big red flag up there watch out with no deal possible the compromisers are left hanging observers say embarrassed the great drama of the opinion was to see this

01:48:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=6480s)

drama of the opinion was to see this helping hand extended by justices Breyer and Souter contemptuously rejected by the conservatives out hence were the discussions there they're together for life they tangle on these issues they tangle vehemently they do put it aside their personal relations survive I can still say after the events of this week in all the turmoil that in nine plus years here I've yet to hear the first unkind word that's why I can say at the end even in the sense I respectfully dissent but this time even Ginsberg does not use the word respectfully ending her opinion with only two words I dissent so what is the fallout now that the court has jumped into the middle of presidential politics experts fear more questions about the courts independence and with George Bush perhaps nominating future justices Democrats tonight promised an even tougher road to confirmation Andrea Mitchell NBC News Washington from Washington [Music] good evening from Washington where it's a new day the unofficial beginning of George W Bush time the 43rd president elected the United States now that Vice President Al Gore has conceded that Texas governor is moving swiftly to organize his administration and he's mapping strategy for dealing with a slowing economy after the narrow was possible political victory NBC's David Gregory again tonight in Austin Texas with the governor and Lisa Myers on Capitol Hill David we'll begin with you please Tom tonight the bush team says tomorrow the president-elect will meet here with Louisiana Senator John Breaux a prominent Democrat who could be asked to join the Bush administration though he's unlikely to accept or at least to help the president elect boards that bipartisan consensus he acknowledges the country needs day one for the president-elect begins in church a symbol the new administration hopes Bush's commitment to heal the nation

01:50:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=6600s)

Bush's commitment to heal the nation after this bitter political contest Bush at the mansion late last night after his address celebrates quietly with close friends and top aides and has a four-minute phone conversation with President Clinton during which he accepts an invitation for a White House meeting next Tuesday and tells the president he looks forward to working with the senator mrs. Clinton that is this morning Clinton praises Bush for the quote generosity of his remarks and promises his best efforts to assure a smooth transition but the essential unity of our nation was reflected in the words and values of those who fought this great contest I was proud of both men this afternoon the first tangible sign of federal help the keys a smart card really to the new administration's transition offices in Florida meanwhile where the wounds from the election fight are freshest Governor Jeb Bush while praising both his brother and gore for their speeches

calls for reforming the system that caused so much division I think they both set a tone that we hope to build on here in Florida in a lighter moment the Florida governor complains he can't even reach his brother to offer congratulations that's because the president-elect is besieged with phone calls from foreign leaders in fooding British Prime Minister Blair I know that he will be a friend of Britain and a friend of Europe Bush speaks with congressional leaders - from both parties and receives a call from Jesse Jackson they talk of a meeting and election reform other key meetings for the president-elect a CIA briefing and discussions with the Secret Service about stepped-up protection for him and his family including this new limousine delivered to the governor's mansion today tonight the bush team while still savoring its long-awaited victory now quickly realizing that 50% of the transition time is gone the scramble is on to fill the cabinet and all the support staff a battle-weary group now forced to work overtime Tom thanks very

01:52:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=6721s)

forced to work overtime Tom thanks very much NBC's David Gregory tonight here in Washington and the capital behind me it is a deeply divided Congress 5050 in the Senate with a tiny Republican majority in the House so all those campaign promises are now being run through that filter Joe Lieberman returned to the Senate today while losing the big race he simultaneously ran successfully for re-election to the Senate from Connecticut NBC's Lisa Myers is on Capitol Hill tonight with a report on the prospects ahead Lisa what's the story there well Tom today Democrats and Republicans buried the hatchet at least for now and promised to try to work together and with Bush now most advise the new president to start small and rack up some early successes to build on this morning Democratic leaders extend an olive branch everything should be on the table let's let's go in with that attitude that we can work together that we can find compromise Senator John Breaux a centrist will meet with Bush tomorrow in Texas says the new president could score big points with Democrats by starting off with election reform to repair the system and reduce in athletics what he needs is a victory but we all need is a victory and the way to get it is to find some things that you can work together and find common ground and get things done Democrats agree that a good candidate for an early victory is Bush's top priority education reform to improve struggling schools they say a bill to give patients new rights and dealing with their HMOs also could be agreed on the first months but older Americans are probably going to have to wait longer for help with their prescription drugs I think this Congress will come together on a package of reforms Medicare and adds prescription drugs to it but it's not going to happen overnight and what about that sweeping 1.3 trillion dollar tax cut Bush promise so important to conservatives today the Republican Speaker of the House urges bush to go slow perhaps start by repealing the so-called marriage penalty and reducing estate taxes it sounds like

01:54:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=6840s)

and reducing estate taxes it sounds like you think you should junk his trillion dollar tax cut no I'm gonna say that I'm saying let's try to just start this to jumpstart the success with some small things that we can do right away interestingly some moderate Democrats say Bush might be able to get a modest across-the-board tax cut because of the economy if the middle class benefits most we're now talking about a tax cut to stimulate a potentially softening American economy to help assure that we don't have a hard landing now one piece of good news for Bush tonight in a new NBC poll 61% of Americans expect more partisan gridlock so virtually anything which can get done will beat expectations Tom thanks very much NBC's Lisa Myers tonight under any circumstances a transition of presidential power is a daunting assignment it involves a whole lot more than just moving from a governor's mansion in Texas to a White House here in the nation's capital NBC's Andrea Mitchell tonight on the task ahead for the Bush family and team it's not entirely a hostile takeover at the White House about 100 permanent household employees cooks stewards Butler's the legendary telephone operators serve all presidents including George Bush the father and now the son the butcher the baker the candlestick maker they all stay on in a federal bureaucracy of 1.8 million people george w bush gets to appoint only three thousand but they are the critical three thousand if Congress gets gridlocked insiders say getting control of these jobs could be the only way for Bush to implement new policies you have

assistant secretaries principal assistant secretaries deputy principal assistant secretaries how do you get one of these jobs unlike top cabinet posts you can't audition by showing up in Florida to watch ads you can try the new Bush

01:56:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=6961s)

watch ads you can try the new Bush transition website or fax your resume to a conservative think-tank resumes are piling up and pushes temporary offices in suburban Virginia eventually 150 thousand applications expected at the official transition offices downtown turned over to Dick Cheney today under receive cheney has worked on five transitions Bush people are fortunate that they have people who've done it before how to minimize snafus first background checks for twenty five hundred of the new appointees sixty pages of forms to fill out if you are a nice normal person with no life you've never gone anywhere you know exactly who your high school classmates are and they all remember you it could take you two or three months of those 1000 also requires Senate confirmation sometimes a political disaster for instance former aides say Bush's father thought former Senator John tower was a sure bet for defense secretary after questions about past drinking he wasn't confirmations got so ugly for Bill Clinton it took nine months to fill the top jobs Bush is getting such a late start experts say he may not have his full team in place until March of 2002 Andrea Mitchell NBC News Washington as for Vice President Gore he was out of sight today as his 24 year career in government comes to an end at least for now there's a good deal of speculation about what he might do next here's NBC's Claire Shipman who's been with the gore campaign from the beginning from all accounts it was one heck of a concession party at the gore residence last night but today the partying over the vice-president waking up to a new reality for the first time since 1976 he's out of a political job this change of routine will be incredibly stimulating to think that the days are no longer scheduled for him from sunup to sundown maybe but what will he do friends and aides say he hasn't given it any real thought yet the Gores do have a

01:58:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=7082s)

any real thought yet the Gores do have a place to go once they move out of here in January two tippers family home in Arlington Virginia they'll also spend some time at their farm in Carthage Tennessee but they're not independently wealthy and Gore will need a job options that his friends and advisers mention writing a book maybe about the environment again or the government running a think-tank or an environmental organization some have suggested university president but Gore recently told one aide that would involve too much fundraising something he'd like to get away from sitting on boards one way to make money some advisers think his internet buddies will help out with that longer term though he said nothing most aides believe Gore will want to run again in 2004 and many experts think he'll be in a good position oh there are a lot of names that are going to be out there for 2004 Berner are any of them really compelling figures maybe not so I think I think Gore we can assume that goal will be in the mix and the immediate plans for the gore family a few days away but at an undisclosed location they don't want the likes of us following them around anymore Claire Shipman NBC News Washington good evening : Powell one of the most respected Americans in any poll a retired four-star general with white house experience at the highest levels an African American who lectured the Republican Party on affirmative action during the convention last summer is about to add another first to his distinguished resume Secretary of State the first major cabinet appointment of president-elect Bush while it had been widely expected it still will be a major statement NBC's David Gregory in Austin tonight after a busy day covering the governor David well Tom it is a done deal except for one small detail Powell has yet to be officially asked but we're told the president-elect will ask him to be Secretary of State during a short meeting at his ranch house tomorrow

02:00:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=7200s)

meeting at his ranch house tomorrow morning before making the nomination public Powell who sits election dais helped was build his foreign policy team was widely expected to be Bush's first cabinet announcement even as his staff was calling members of Congress to preview the pic the president-elect tried not to let the

news slip I look forward to making the announcement tomorrow and I hope you come as for other cabinet posts that Bush also hope to convince Democratic Senator John Breaux of Louisiana to join his administration he was disappointed when bro who supports Bush's stand on Medicare reform made his wishes known immediately during their meeting today the senator made it clear as he wants to stay in the Senate work with to get something done Bush who says he wants to put the country quote ahead of partisanship promises again today to aggressively seek out Democrats for his administration his transition team is working double-time now to fill the cabinet and top White House jobs with only five weeks before the inauguration but despite the breakneck pace was today takes time to reflect on his personal feelings during his first two days as president-elect admitting to his sleepless night after Boras concession speech and a keen sense of the quote great responsibilities of the job I'm a more patient person than before I am my enthusiasm for the opportunity that has not in the least bit waned a matter of fact I didn't feel more enthusiastic about the opportunity before before all of us opportunities and difficulties despite misgivings raised by the Republican House Speaker about the size of president-elect Bush's proposed 1.3 trillion dollar tax cut which says tonight he remains undeterred citing his concerns about a possible economic slowdown as the primary reason to pursue his version of tax relief Tom thanks very much NBC's David Gregory tonight general Powell a New York City

02:02:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=7320s)

tonight general Powell a New York City kid who rose for the ranks after joining ROTC at City College is no stranger to the demands of being a superpower in a volatile world but now he's in charge of designing and executing foreign policy or soon will be NBC's Andrea Mitchell on what he faces what we can expect Colin Powell at home tonight not talking a man many feel could have been elected president himself if he wanted a run now about to take charge of foreign policy for George W Bush today we have the most powerful nation on earth militarily economically by any measure viewed widely as a national hero Paul say one of the most admired men in America Dick Cheney's charismatic partner in helping the president elects father win the Gulf War first we're gonna shut it off and then we're gonna kill it I'm exuberant over the prospect of his stewardship of American foreign policy there's a lot of very dangerous places in the world due to the fecklessness of the Clinton administration most controversial foreign policy decision ending the war without going after Saddam Hussein he argued that would have met occupying Baghdad jeopardizing future relations throughout the Mideast but AG left Saddam as a threat the legacy of the Gulf War is a dictator who's determined to hold on to his weapons of mass destruction in fact Pawel clashed often with members of the Clinton team over his so-called power doctrine do not fight Wars unless you can use overwhelming force Powell doctrine is more than just overwhelming force in the first instance it is making the point that force is not the first option you have butt pals reluctance to use force in Bosnia exploded into a fierce debate with Madeleine Albright she was UN ambassador Powell still chairman of the Joint Chiefs he later wrote in his book Albright asked quote what's the point of having the superb military that you're always talking about if we can't use it he wrote quote I thought I was going to

02:04:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=7440s)

he wrote quote I thought I was going to have an aneurysm the so-called Powell doctrine you know I'm not I'm not a fan of which is that you don't do anything military unless you do everything militarily I think that is not suited for the 21st century but Biden and others agree power brings other qualities to the bush team extraordinary popularity and diversity in fact senators say tonight that power will be confirmed by acclamation becoming America's first African American Secretary of State fourth in line for the presidency Andrea Mitchell NBC News Washington won in the first major decision of his new administration president-elect George W Bush as expected announced his choice for Secretary of State retired general : Powell a groundbreaking move because if he is confirmed by the Senate Powell will become the first African American to ever hold that position we begin our coverage with NBC's Campbell Brown in Crawford Texas good evening Campbell good evening John president-elect Bush became emotional today announcing his first cabinet appointment a man he described as an American Hero in the gymnasium of the Crawford Texas elementary school Bush introduced the man he pledged would be a giant among statesmen comparing general Powell to a

celebrated US Secretary of State George C Marshall author of the plan to rebuild Europe after World War two and I would say of general Powell what Harry Truman said of general Marshall he is a tower of strength and common sense when you find somebody like that you have to hang on to him with little foreign policy experience of his own Bush is expected to give Powell wide latitude to set the agenda and define this new administration's goals abroad the old world map as we knew it of a red side and a blue side that competed for something called the third world is gone and the new map is a mosaic a mosaic of many different pieces in many different colors spreading around the world a

02:06:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=7562s)

colors spreading around the world a world that has seen that communism did not work fascism did not work Nazism did not work if you want to be successful in the 21st century you must find your path to democracy market economics and a system which frees the talents of men and women to pursue their individual destinies Powell is enormous ly popular with both Democrats and Republicans and may well be a unifying force after Bush's battle for the presidency he is also the first African American Secretary of State and Powell noted that would likely be the headline following his announcement I want to repeat it because I hope it will give the inspiration to young African Americans coming along but beyond that all young Americans coming along that no matter where you began in a society with hard work and with dedication and with the opportunities have presented this by this society there are no limitations upon you it was at Bush's Crawford ranch just after election day where he and Powell met to talk about the job and was at the ranch this morning where Bush formally asked him to serve putting his easy charm on display today Powell joked the president elects weekend getaway was a place he was somewhat out of place from the South Bronx and I don't care what you say those cows look dangerous more the new foreign policy team will be announced tomorrow but today belonged to the long-anticipated choice : pal John NBC's Campbell Brown in Texas thank you now the foreign policy challenges facing the new administration are numerous more on that from NBC John Palmer at the White House good evening John good evening John president-elect Bush who moves into the White House in five weeks gave some clear insights today into his management style as president I will set our priorities and we will stand by them

02:08:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=7681s)

our priorities and we will stand by them if we do not set our own agenda it will be said by others for his part : Powell lost no time in getting to foreign policy specifics often sounding as much like a soldier as a diplomat issues such as dealing with acts of international terrorism like the October bombing of the USS Cole we will not be afraid of them we will not be frightened by them we will meet them we will match them we will contend with them we will defend our interests from a position of strength the continuing violence in the Middle East and the search for a comprehensive peace we must always ensure that Israel lives in freedom and in security and peace but at the same time we have to do everything we can to deal with the aspirations of the Palestinians and the other nations in the region who have an interest in this the dangers posed by Saddam Hussein's threat to peace and stability we are in the strong position he is in the weak position and I think it is possible to re-energize those sanctions and to continue to contain him and then confront him should that become necessary the deployment of US troops in Bosnia Kosovo and other trouble spots our armed forces are stretched rather thin and there is a limit to how many of the deployments we can sustain so we're not cutting and running we're gonna make a careful assessment of it in consultation with our allies the controversial issue of whether to build a costly missile defense system a national missile defense is an essential part of our overall strategic force posture and I still hearken back to the original purpose of such a defense and that is to start diminishing the value of offensive weapons as for dealing with Russia and China we will work with them not as potential enemies and not as adversaries but not yet as strategic partners but as nations that are seeking their way White House officials today declined to comment on the bush Powell positions on

02:10:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=7801s)

comment on the bush Powell positions on foreign policy but it was noted here that they emphasized the need for the United States to have a strong continued role in world affairs John NBC's John Palmer at the White House John thank you that general Powell's long and distinguished record of public service virtually ensures a speedy confirmation as Secretary of State more on that from NBC's Jim miklaszewski he's one of the most admired and trusted public figures in America soon to be trusted with America's foreign policy : Powell a decorated Vietnam vet who rose through the army ranks to become the Pentagon's top military commander a four-star national hero who helped win the Gulf War against the Iraqi military brings a vision he brings experience he brings a calm confident demeanor the son of Jamaican immigrants Powell grew up in the Bronx and joined the army straight out of college ROTC after Vietnam I'll soon found the political fast track serving four different administration's in Washington rising to the top in the Reagan White House as the first African American national security advisor as Joint Chiefs chairman he publicly opposed President Clinton's attempts to end the ban against gays in the military and at the GOP convention harshly criticized conservative Republicans who condemn affirmative action for minority students some in our party missed no opportunity to roundly and loudly condemn affirmative action that helped a few thousand black kids get an education but you hardly hear a whimper when it's affirmative action lobbyists who load our federal tax code with preferences for special interest it doesn't work it doesn't work you can't make that case there matters from which I disagree with them as a matter of fact but one cannot but respect him because of the candor with which he speaks the good faith with which he speaks and the honesty by all accounts Powell will be easily confirmed by the Senate I think his credentials and his charisma will

02:12:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=7921s)

his credentials and his charisma will have a significant effect beneficial effect on the conduct of American foreign policy and a man who many believe actually has what it takes to be president will settle for Secretary of State Jim McClure chef's key NBC News Washington the transition at the White House will be a primary topic tomorrow and NBC's Meet the Press Bush chief of staff Andrew card Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott House Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt and the Reverend Jesse Jackson are Tim Russert's guests and this additional program note the inside story of that remarkable 36 day battle for the White House through the insights of those who were involved can be seen tomorrow night on MSNBC on cable in a special report called days of doubt how the White House was won the politics of the transfer of power president elect George W Bush followed through on his campaign pledge to bring diversity to his new administration again today by selecting a second african-american to his foreign policy team and a Hispanic to be his chief White House Counsel NBC's Campbell Brown joins us tonight from Austin good evening Campbell good evening John Condoleezza Rice was president-elect Bush's top foreign policy advisor during the campaign she will continue in that role at the White House as national security adviser at the governor's mansion today Bush described Rice as brilliant experienced someone whose judgment he trusts rice returns to the White House having last served on the national security team of the previous Bush administration it's a wonderful time for the United States and foreign policy because it's a time when markets and democracy are spreading when our values are being affirmed around the world and yet it's a time of great challenge Bush also introduced other key members of his team Texas Supreme Court justice Alberto Gonzalez will become White House Counsel the administration's top lawyer and campaign communications director Karen Hughes has been given the title of

02:14:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=8040s)

Karen Hughes has been given the title of counselor to the president with the announcement yesterday of : powell as Secretary of State Bush's so far named two women in two African Americans to top jobs and today Bush said his choices should send a message people who work hard and make the right decisions in life can achieve anything they want in America this evening Bush makes his first trip to Washington as president-elect Monday he'll meet with Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan with congressional leaders of both parties and he'll interview potential cabinet members Tuesday he will lunch with President Clinton at the White House then meet privately with Vice President Gore advisers describe the visits as courtesy calls intended to foster goodwill between the parties after the bruising election battle but already Bush's taking a

hard line on his proposed 1.3 trillion dollar tax cut which Democrats and some Republicans say is too big Bush told Time magazine which today named him Person of the Year quote I'm not prepared to compromise I think it's the right size Bush says he expects to name the rest of his White House staff and cabinet in the next two weeks the foreign policy team now in place with the appointments of Powell and Rice John NBC's Campbell Brown in Austin Texas thank you in times of crisis a president's top adviser on national security matters can become a household name McGeorge Bundy during the Cuban Missile Crisis Henry Kissinger as the war in Vietnam worsened all before Condoleezza Rice were men more on Bush's choice from NBC's Colleen Dominguez from an Italian musical term which refers to performing with sweetness a tough task when advising a president during a national security crisis but the 46 year old rice is a veteran of tough tasks at the age of just 26 she was a professor at prestigious Stanford University later becoming that school's

02:16:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=8160s)

University later becoming that school's youngest provost and the first African American woman to hold the position she's still a senior fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institute a public policy think-tank which favors conservative approaches Stanford colleague and former Secretary of State George Shultz I think she's very well prepared for this job she knows the subject matter they can joke but then they get serious and really talk about a subject and he listens to her Rice's first tour at the White House was in 1989 working for the father of her current boss she served as director of Soviet and Eastern European affairs for the NSC fluent in Russian she's discussed arms control issues with top foreign officials and advised the Pentagon's Joint Chiefs on strategic nuclear policy ladies and gentlemen please welcome my dear friend dr. condi rice introduced to the country by the man she's been advising for almost two years rice spoke at this year's Republican National Convention I found a party that sees me as an individual not as part of a group the only child of two educators rice excelled academically and athletically while growing up in the South during the struggle to end racial segregation losing a friend in the bombing at Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church calling herself and all over the map Republican Rice's a fiscal conservative a supporter of both affirmative action and gay rights and in her words mildly pro-choice Condoleezza Rice is a trained classical pianist who trains hard in the gym as well she's often said her dream job would be Commissioner of the National Football League but the playing field she's stepping onto now is quite a bit bigger military calling to me NBC News no no this is a surprise to the president-elect who knows that he'll begin his term of office as his father ended his trying to prop up a sagging

02:18:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=8280s)

ended his trying to prop up a sagging economy to that end Governor Bush today sent a strong signal and his choice for Treasury secretary more on that now from NBC's David Gregory in Austin again tonight David Thom increasingly concerned about the economy's downward spiral today president-elect Bush pushes up the announcement of his nominee for Treasury secretary as you say eager according to aides to send a strong signal that a man with a steady hand is going to become the nation's chief financial officer declaring it's his job to anticipate an economic downturn today the president-elect nominates businessman Paul O'Neill for Treasury secretary of a new bush says can calm the markets and quote calm people's nerves should the economy keep sliding our hope in this administration is that our economy remain robust but should it not we have a plan O'Neill the 65 year old chairman of aluminum maker Alcoa and deputy budget director under President Ford says he's a strong component of Bush's 1.3 trillion dollar tax cut plan though he's been criticized by Republicans for supporting President Clinton's 1992 proposal to impose a gasoline tax O'Neal also backs Bush's idea to allow workers to put a small portion of their social security taxes into private investment accounts a plan that Bush says today will be the engine for future economic growth I think you'd be much more interested first in cutting taxes and the past administration I think he will be like them and trying to create surpluses in the government later in the day more cabinet announcements Bush nominates lifelong friend and campaign manager Don Evans for her secretary in a bid to add more diversity to his administration names Californian and venneman as his secretary of agriculture the first woman to be nominated for the job and picks former Cuban refugee Mel Martinez of Florida to have the Department of Housing and Urban Development

02:20:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=8401s)

Housing and Urban Development between announcements Bush determined to broaden his appeal among minority groups that overwhelmingly rejected his compassionate conservative campaign message meets today with black clergymen and other religious leaders I look forward to the chance of healing a nation that has been divided as a result of election some late word tonight about the cabinet Montana governor mark Roscoe governor Bush's choice to be Attorney General has reportedly turned down that job making now Oklahoma governor Frank Keating the front-runner meanwhile tomorrow a major step in the official transfer of power ceremonial president-elect Bush will officially resign as Texas Governor effective tomorrow afternoon Tom thank you very much NBC's David Gregory tonight now to politics and the transfer of power president elect George W Bush followed through on his campaign pledge to bring diversity to his new administration again today by selecting a second african-american to his foreign policy team and a Hispanic to be his chief white House Counsel NBC's Campbell Brown joins us tonight from Austin good evening Campbell good evening John Condoleezza Rice was president-elect Bush's top foreign policy advisor during the campaign she will continue in that role at the White House as national security adviser at the governor's mansion today Bush described Rice as brilliant experienced someone whose judgment he trusts rice returns to the White House having last served on the national security team of the previous Bush administration it's a wonderful time for the United States and foreign policy because it's a time when markets and democracy are spreading when our values are being affirmed around the world and yet it's a time of great challenge Bush also introduced other key members of his team Texas Supreme Court justice Alberto Gonzalez will become White House Counsel the administration's top lawyer and campaign communications director karen hughes has been given the title of

02:22:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=8521s)

hughes has been given the title of counselor to the president with the announcement yesterday of : powell as Secretary of State Bush's so far named two women and two african-americans to top jobs and today Bush said his choices should send a message people who work hard and make the right decisions in life can achieve anything they want in America this evening Bush makes his first trip to Washington as president-elect Monday he'll meet with Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan with congressional leaders of both parties and he'll interview potential cabinet members Tuesday he will lunch with President Clinton at the White House then meet privately with Vice President Gore advisers describe the visits as courtesy calls intended to foster goodwill between the parties after the bruising election battle but already Bush's taking a hard line on his proposed 1.3 trillion dollar tax cut which Democrats and some Republicans say is too big Bush told Time magazine which today named him Person of the Year quote I'm not prepared to compromise I think it's the right size Bush says he expects to name the rest of his White House staff and cabinet in the next two weeks the foreign policy team now in place with the appointments of Powell and Rice John NBC's Campbell Brown in Austin Texas thank you in times of price good evening governor george w bush had a tour of his new quarters today and a lengthy meeting with the man that he made a campaign issue president clinton he then and went on to a much shorter more private conversation with a man he edged out for the presidency Vice President Al Gore these were largely symbolic appearances but they do come against the backdrop of a faltering American economy and some vexing national security issues including whether President Clinton should visit North Korea before he leaves office we begin tonight with NBC's David Gregory who trailed the governor across the capital today David well Tom White House

02:24:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=8642s)

capital today David well Tom White House aides described the two and a half hour meeting between the president and the president-elect normally a symbolic changing of the gaurd chat as a serious discussion or Bush peppered the president with foreign policy questions one issue that did not come up may be the most pressing to the new administration the economy behind the smiles and hearty handshake Bush appears hesitant sitting beside the man he'll succeed especially when asked whether he'll inherit a recession from mr. Clinton I raised my hand in comments but it's clear he is worth repeating his concerns in recent days that the

economy is slowing down the president dismisses the idea of a recession but predicts Bush won't have an easy road I think there'll be things to be managed still have economic challenges and you gotta give him a chance to meet them if not try to figure it all out in advance in fact some Bush advisors believe this may be the best time yet to push his huge 1.3 trillion dollar tax cut proposal if and it's a big f but if we're heading into an economic downturn then this would be a very serendipitous time to reduce marginal tax rates both Bush and Clinton enjoyed today's meeting aides say Clinton who appreciated Bush's father welcoming him eight years ago and his advice throughout his presidency trying today says one aid to quote lower the temperature after the campaign I'm so honored that he was extended his hospitality to me and why yesterday he didn't need to do this and I'm I'm most grateful that he would do so Bush's most anticipated meeting of the day his first with Al Gore since the election surprisingly sure the two men sit down alone for 15 minutes aides say Gore offers help during the transition once in your Bush advisors saying the president-elect expected nothing more than a photo-op with both men smiling also tonight as Bush leaves a snowy Capitol transition sources say he's preparing to nominate Don Evans the president elects closest

02:26:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=8762s)

Don Evans the president elects closest friend and campaign chairman for Commerce Secretary tomorrow in Austin in fact Republican sources say tonight that Bush is poised for a flurry of cabinet appointments in the coming days including nominees for attorney general defense secretary Treasury and housing Tom thanks very much NBC's David Gregory tonight when a new president comes to town it means a change in Washington that goes well beyond tax policy different names and the cabinet and questions about the first lady's role as NBC's Andrea Mitchell tells us tonight this is much more than trading one baby boomer for another : powell starts his transition today at the State Department a surprise drop-in at a recruiting session for minority foreign service officers to that transition headquarters the latest resume account 34,000 and one for 6,500 jobs after eight years Arkansas Razorbacks are out Texas Longhorns are in the Republicans are coming to town and it's always exciting when you've got somebody new coming in who's gonna bring in a whole new crew and people here like power and they like to be close to power so how are Republicans different from Democrats they're incredibly well dressed they wonderful jewels the rich ones do they give very elaborate parties they really have a wonderful time I must say if you want to have a good time you go to Texas especially excited real estate agents and Merchants Dallas based Neiman Marcus already seeing a surge in sales on luxury items ball gowns Jules with the Republicans being yen I think it's gonna be a very dress stop community and no hint of a recession here many of our couture gallons run anywhere from thirty five hundred to ten thousand that still leaves a little leftover for a down payment on a Georgetown house if it's nice if it's priced reasonably and shows well even if it's you know three

02:28:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=8880s)

shows well even if it's you know three million dollars you may get competing offers on it in the first week uptown in Cleveland Park this house hilary clinton looked at yesterday only one point seven million dollars for new officials without multi-million dollar book contracts even a small condo starts at two hundred fifty thousand if money's no object you could always do what clinton Treasury secretary bob rubin did rent a hotel suite for six years at least the president-elect doesn't need a road map to the Oval Office or the rest of Washington last night he found his way to his family's favorite restaurant you might think tex-mex but it's Chinese they have a beef session proper and should have made famous by senior President Bush okay and no broccoli is also very famous worldwide and with Republicans taking over what happens to all those Democrats many will stay become lobbyists and hope for another turn four years from now Andrea Mitchell NBC News Washington Shin going to the Texas State House today to resign his duties as governor of that state NBC's David Gregory is in Austin again tonight David Tom crediting the state for shaping him as the leader Bush's resignation as governor of Texas marks another key step on the road to the White House and for Bush it is also a sentimental transfer of power thank you from the president-elect today a poignant farewell and there's only one thing that would cause me to leave early and that's to become your president after six years as governor Bush resign touting a record of quote steady progress on issues like tax relief and

education reform both now topping his agenda as he heads to Washington Bush makes it clear he leaves his state with a heavy heart but my wish is is that the new governor enjoys living in the mansion as much as we did it won't be

02:30:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=9002s)

mansion as much as we did it won't be our home but Texas always will be Bush who today means separately with Latino leaders and a bipartisan group from Congress to discuss his education reform goals has also made additional cabinet selections transitions horses say Bush is prepared now to name New Jersey Governor Christie Todd Whitman had the Environmental Protection Agency and nominate wisconsin governor tommy Thompson to leave the Department of Health and Human Services the Whitman announcement is expected tomorrow here in Austin as well as other personnel appointments aides saying tonight that Bush who's named less than half his cabinet so far may need as much as two more weeks to complete the job Tom thanks very much NBC's David Gregory tonight in tonight Brian Williams good evening America's second ever Bush administration is taking shape tonight with the naming of a GOP veteran to a crucial position if confirmed conservative Missouri Republican Senator John Ashcroft will be this nation's next Attorney General with this move mr. Bush rewards a defeated US Senator comes the far right politically and makes a decidedly law-and-order statement it wasn't the only news out of Austin today either we begin there tonight with NBC News correspondent David Gregory David get in view good evening to you Bryan a flurry of pre-christmas appointments today most notably senator Ashcroft as Attorney General while conservative sources say he is not Bush's first choice and could face a difficult confirmation battle this Missouri Republican will go way to appease the president-elect conservative political base a surprise pic for the nation's highest law enforcement officer senator Ashcroft who this year lost his re-election bid to the late governor Mel Carnahan who died in a plane crash before election day was not a frontrunner for the job Ashcroft only emerged after Montana governor mark Roscoe surprisingly withdrew his name but today Bush praises

02:32:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=9121s)

withdrew his name but today Bush praises his pick as a man who will not quote politicize the Justice Department a veiled swipe at Attorney General Janet Reno who Republicans have criticized for her failure to name an independent counsel to probe alleged campaign finance abuses in the Clinton White House Ashcroft himself adding I will it advise your administration with integrity and I will enforce the laws of the United States of America with integrity a nomination proving more difficult for Bush's defense secretary Republican sources saying former Indiana senator Dan Coates thought to be a lock for the job is now more questionable after an interview with Bush failed to cinch the deal and that has led to Bush adviser and former Pentagon official Paul Wolfowitz RIA merging but Bush has said to harbor doubts about both until I'm absolutely certain that the person I and that would look to people that I'm talking to her is the right person I'm not gonna I'm not gonna move later in the day more appointments Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore have to head the Republican National Committee and even as a small crowd gathers to protest Bush's environmental record as governor the president-elect names a moderate Republican New Jersey Governor Christie Todd Whitman to head the Environmental Protection Agency a position Bush announces will carry cabinet rank in his administration by naming Whitman an abortion rights supporter Bush appears determined to strike an ideological balance if they were overconfident you know you'd be seeing a very very conservative Catholic put in but this shows that they there know that they're starting off you know first but long yardage which is balancing act continues so far he's named 6 of 14 cabinet secretaries but he has yet to a Democrat something he's pledged to do given his razor thin victory Bryan David Gregory in Austin Texas for us tonight thanks as we mentioned this new Attorney General designate was in the news last

02:34:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=9240s)

General designate was in the news last month for losing his Senate race to an opponent who had died in a plane crash but john ashcroft of missouri is known for a lot more than that more tonight from NBC News justice correspondent Pete Williams today's nomination brings the bush team its first experienced baritone a member of the singing senators quartet my little heart job and its first bedrock conservative john ashcroft also describes himself as a deeply religious man doesn't smoke or drink his appointment will of course be welcomed I think enthusiastically by by conservatives at age 58 Ashcroft chose to concede after this year's narrow Senate campaign defeat rejecting suggestions that he can test the election of a man who had died in a plane crash I'm gonna go to the farm and spend some time with my family after I finished doing the work of the people in the Congress the son and grandson of Assemblies of God ministers John Ashcroft went east to college to Yale then to one of the nation's top law schools the University of Chicago during two terms as Missouri's Attorney General he fought a court-ordered plan for busing students in st. Louis calling it excessively expensive he went on to serve two terms as governor before heading off to Washington in 1994 in the Senate he pushed hard to restrict the availability of abortions and he attracted civil rights protests for opposing the nomination of a black Missouri judge to the federal bench Ashcroft said the judge was soft on crime a man of traditional values Ashcroft is also one of the Senate's leading technology experts one of the first to post an office website that background may help when he faces one of his first big choices if confirmed whether to continue the government's fight to dismantle Microsoft some civil rights groups are already vowing to fight Ashcroft but his confirmation will come before the Senate Judiciary Committee where he has served the past four years suggesting an easy win there Pete Williams NBC News Washington moving smoothly and about half his

02:36:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=9360s)

moving smoothly and about half his cabinet choices announced George W Bush spent most of this weekend in private with his family but he was put on notice today that at least one of his nominees will face a stiff challenge more from NBC's Campbell Brown leaving his ranch in Crawford Texas this morning president-elect Bush returned to Austin to spend one last Christmas in the governor's mansion Bush begins this week with six of fourteen cabinet secretaries named retired General Colin Powell aluminum company executive Paul O'Neill close friend and businessman Don Evans Cuban immigrant Mel Martinez from Florida former California Secretary of Food and Agriculture and Veneman and his most controversial nomination so far defeated Missouri Senator John Ashcroft Ashcroft has been criticized by women's groups for his ardent opposition to abortion the n-double-a-cp accuses him of consistently opposing civil rights and affirmative action today Vermont Democrat Senator Patrick Leahy said he expects Ashcroft will face an aggressive confirmation hearing I intend there will be a fair hearing that does not mean to be a pushover here of course there would be tough questions last week the president-elect spoke publicly about the possibility the economy could be heading for a recession today the outgoing Treasury secretary insisted the current economic expansion while slowing somewhat is still based on strong fundamentals if we can just build on those strong fundamentals this is a resilient economy also today the first extended comments from former President Bush describing the night his son became president-elect friend George you walk into that house chamber I was sobbing literally like a tiny baby I had my chance and now it's his and he'll do a wonderful job for our country president-elect Bush is going fishing with his father and the rest of his family in Florida this week he then travels to Washington DC advisers say more cabinet announcements could happen

02:38:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=9481s)

more cabinet announcements could happen there at the end of the week Campbell Brown NBC News Austin Texas tonight the president-elect is taking a break while he can a few days of fishing in a state that finally put him over the top Florida and he brought along a man who knows a few things about putting together a government and fishing NBC's Bob Shaw is traveling with George W Bush in Florida tonight Bob Brian this is a different world in the Florida where Harry Truman Kane to play poker and Richard Nixon walked the beach in his wingtips but for the soon-to-be first family this could be the last real vacation for quite some time it's a two day family reunion the president elect his father and two brothers planning to golf and fish off this spit of sand in the Gulf of Mexico Boca Grande which the Chamber of Commerce calls a slow sleepy place where

the Astor's armours and du Pont's came for Sun and surf no McDonald's no hotel chains here the garbage is even picked up in a fleet of golf carts the Bush family will stay in a four bedroom luxury cottage 1655 dollars per night at the historic Gasparilla in coat and tie for dinner no credit cards please here for the third visit the family says it likes the area's solitude just it's a quiet place the fishing here is about as good as anyplace in the world most of the town population 900 served as a welcoming committee today curious approving and respectful there's not going to be that many people is going to hunt them down just to get autographs and that kind of thing librarian here the last 51 years pansy cost says the locals will give the Bush family all the space it needs are they more or less safe well good ma'am you know I meant it's just a matter of they're coming to visit even Florence and Walter Stig Lee who had to check out so the bushes could check in there you have all these odds and ends and the

02:40:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=9601s)

have all these odds and ends and the drawers are all out yeah even visitors managed to put country over partisanship well we weren't very happy about it but removed and Brian the word here strictly relaxation don't look for any news from the president-elect until he leaves and goes to Washington on thanks there is politics and transition news to report to you tonight George W Bush has selected his new defense secretary it turns out to be an old defense secretary who's about to serve his fifth Republican president and that makes 8 out of 14 cabinet members at the Pentagon NBC's Jim miklaszewski reports on the growing bush team with only 23 days before he takes office president-elect Bush names the seventh member of his cabinet an old veteran Donald Rumsfeld for Secretary of Defense and he's gonna be a great Secretary of Defense again for the 68 year-old Rumsfeld it's the second time around he was Gerald Ford's defense secretary for 14 months prior to that he was Ford's White House chief of staff a three-term member of Congress and a veteran Navy pilots Rumsfeld says he sees eye-to-eye with Bush on rebuilding America's military and as head of an independent commission he made a strong case for a controversial Bush priority national missile defense to guard against a ballistic missile attack on the US and I consider that myself to be a real threat Bush made clear today Rumsfeld will be a first string player on his foreign policy team general Powell's a strong figure and Dick Cheney's no shrinking violet but neither is Don Rumsfeld transition sources say tomorrow Bush is expected to name Wisconsin governor tommy Thompson secretary for Health and Human Services Rumsfeld wanted to be CIA director but now that he's headed here to the Pentagon Republican sources say that the current director George Tenet a Democrat may keep his job for now Bryan Jim McClure chef ski at the Pentagon tonight thanks transition and today's diverse

02:42:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=9722s)

thanks transition and today's diverse slate of cabinet picks from George W Bush they range from a decorated veteran to the nation's senior governor NBC's Jim miklaszewski tonight on today's new additions to the rapidly filling cabinet in a final flurry of appointments before the new year president-elect Bush today adds four more names to his cabinet wisconsin governor tommy Thompson Health and Human Services Houston School Superintendent rod Paige education former Colorado Attorney General Gale Norton Interior and Anthony principies a Navy vet awarded the Bronze Star in Vietnam for Veterans Affairs but almost immediately some come under a heavy political fire I am a pro-life governor Thompson stand against abortion draws strong opposition today from abortion rights groups which pledged to fight his nomination along with Bush's choice for attorney General John asked I think the nominations of governor Thompson and Senator Ashcroft prove that we're right these are any choice hardliners in the key positions environmentalists here moaning equally stiff opposition at Norton for interior Norton says today she fully supports opening Alaska's wildlife refuge to oil and gas exploration the belief is that there are huge amounts of oil available in that area Norton worked at interior for the Reagan White House where controversial secretary James Watt was forced to resign after trying to sell off public lands she comes out of the James Watt background we're not ready for a James Watt era again in three weeks Bush has made 12 of 15 cabinet level picks including three women and two African Americans labor transportation and energy remained to be filled but he's only

got three weeks before he moves into the White House and the election delay pushed him way back on the transition calendar most experts agree however Bush is conducting the smoothest transition in decades it took Ronald Reagan 10 weeks to fill

02:44:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxuGeBOhN4g&t=9840s)

it took Ronald Reagan 10 weeks to fill his cabinet George Bush Senior nine weeks and Bill Clinton eight Clinton's transition also stumbled badly over Attorney General rejects and support for gays in the military he hadn't really hit a stride until the inaugural week and beyond so given that I think Bush is way ahead tonight Bush is back in Texas for the new year weekend the next week it's right back to work with a two-day economic summit in Austin chemical chefs key NBC News Washington to politics and government and science that the incoming president shouldn't expect much of a honeymoon here's NBC's Norah O'Donnell the end of the year finds the nation's capital preparing for the new year and a new president there are just 21 days until the inauguration of George W Bush who's pledged to govern in the spirit of unity and bipartisanship after his narrow victory his advisors are now signaling the bush intends to lead as if he had a mandate and send his campaign platform to Congress without compromise among the most controversial items his 1.3 trillion dollar tax cut I campaigned on a clear view of tax relief and that's what I'm gonna bring to the floor of the house in the Senate but even Republican leaders warned it won't get passed in its entirety it's gonna be a challenge to work out but President Bush has has I think a good proposal that Congress will consider will probably adjust it to some extent the Democrats leader in the Senate Tom Daschle I'm a little concerned as well that we're not governing as much from the center as I think we should Bush also faces a showdown with Republican Senator John McCain over campaign finance reform today another Senate Republican said there's no need for McCain to back down we don't work for a president we don't serve under a president we serve with a president one more trouble spot ahead for Bush Senate confirmation of his cabinet Democrats are angered he's picked only Republicans most of them social conservatives we

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most of them social conservatives we haven't seen any actual bipartisan choices yet for the cabinet three cabinet positions remain to be filled energy transportation and labor the president-elect is expected to announce those appointments in the next few days nor O'Donnell NBC News the White House

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